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No. 349.

## LOVE'S ART.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

I wrote her name on parchment white,  
And hid it from the common stare;  
Next morn I sought it, but my sight  
Revealed no sign of writing there.  
The wondrous magic of Love's pen—  
The magic that discards man's art—  
Had wrought; and when I looked again  
I saw her name deep in my heart!

## Rifle and Tomahawk:

OR,

NED WYLDE, THE BOY SCOUT.

A Romance of the Sioux War.

BY "TEXAS JACK."

(J. B. OMOHUNDRO.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROSE OF THE ROSEBUD.

SOME three leagues away from the scenes presented in the foregoing chapters, a well-timbered gorge led up into the mountains, its sides broken here and there by huge masses of rocks that rose in jutting peaks, forming a wild and picturesque expanse of scenery—a fitting home for the red children of the forests, whose natures were scarcely less wild than their surroundings.

Near the mouth of this canon, almost concealed by the shadows of the tree under which she stood, a girl, clad in Indian costume, was as motionless as a statue, evidently awaiting the coming of some expected person.

For perhaps an hour she had remained there, in that mute, thoughtful attitude, solitary and alone.

The sound of a light footfall broke at length upon her listening ears, and she turned with eager expectancy, to behold emerge from the gloom a tall, jaunty-looking warrior, who the next instant stood by her side.

That this was not the person expected could be seen at a glance, for the young girl started, a frown swept over her face, and she stepped quickly backward, as though about to fly; but a moment after she halted and stood firm, a bold, beautiful woman, with defiant manner and flashing eyes.

"The Rose of the Rosebud is alone on the mountain; does she wait for the Long Bow, or shall the Biting Wolf cheer her breast?" and the warrior spoke in a low, not unmusical voice.

"The Rose of the Rosebud cares not to see the Long Bow or the Biting Wolf; both are brave warriors; but her heart beats slow in their presence."

"She came from her tepee to be alone, for her soul is sad with the dreams of blood; the birds trill sadly in the forests, and the moon and the sun but light up the war-path through mountain and prairie."

"The Rose is not here to meet the Long Bow, then?" resumed the warrior, as if determined upon a certain object.

"Biting Wolf, my tongue is not crooked," replied the maiden, with spirit.

"The Biting Wolf would speak to the Rose of the Rosebud; he has many things to whisper under his blanket."

"The Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse are on the war-path, and the Black Moon has already reddened his scalping-knife with the blood of the pale-faces; soon, all of the young braves are to join them, and ere the Biting Wolf would go, he tells to the Rose his love; he would place her in his tepee to gladden his heart when he comes back from the red trail."

"Yes, the trail will be red—the wail of the women will mingle with the howl of the wolf over the dead."

"The Sioux will take many scalps, but the end of the trail will lead our nation to death; the Sioux graves will dot every hillside and prairie."

"Bah! the Rose of the Rosebud talks like a papoose; she forgets that the pale-faces have robbed us of our hunting-grounds, have trampled upon the graves of our fathers; she forgets that we shiver and starve, and that we must seek the red blood from the pale-face heart."

"The Biting Wolf forgets that the pale-faces are like the leaves on the trees. Let his voice be for peace, for he is a great warrior and should know that the Sioux must fly before our foes like the buffalo before the prairie-fire."

Biting Wolf listened in patience, thinking more of the rippling sweetness of the maiden's voice, than of what she said.

After a pause of a moment the Rose of the Rosebud again asked her companion to leave her alone, and with a look of regret he turned away, and she was again by herself; but no longer did she stand like a statue, gazing out upon the plain, lying white and open in the moonlight, for she seemed impatient, turned restlessly about, and now and then stamped her tiny, moccasined foot with an angry gesture.

Suddenly she started visibly; for a tall form, without a moment's warning, stood by her side.

It was a huge, brawny warrior, in all his war-paint and feathers—his face stern, his arms folded across his red breast.

"The Rose of the Rosebud leaves her tepee



"I will halt and fire—then I will be certain," cried the boy, and he was drawing rein, when—

to walk in the moonlight with the Biting Wolf," he said, in a low, savage tone.

"The Rose came alone, to be alone; the Biting Wolf met her, and when she told him to leave her he walked away; will the Long Bow do as much?"

"The Long Bow is a great brave; he is ready to go upon the war-path with the Sitting Bull when the moon is gone; but, before he goes, he would ask the Rose to be his bride; he would rather have her in his tepee than many pale-face scalps on his lodge-pole."

"The Biting Wolf is a coward; he would not kill a sick buffalo; but the Long Bow is a great warrior."

"The Rose of the Rosebud will live alone; will the Long Bow leave her now?"

"The Rose smiles on the heart of the Biting Wolf."

"No, she has no heart for the Biting Wolf—she has less for the Long Bow."

"The blood of the pale-faces runs in the veins of the Rose, for her heart is double, her tongue is crooked; but she shall never enter the tepee of the Biting Wolf—she shall die first, and the warrior hissed forth his words with a venom of jealous rage that startled the maiden, and she turned, as if about to fly."

But he seized her arm, and drew from his belt his tomahawk.

There was danger in the savage; his jealous love had driven him mad for the moment.

But the Rose did not tremble under the peril, but looked with scorn into the warrior's face, while she lifted her disengaged hand with a warning gesture.

"The daughter of the Medicine Queen has no fear of Long Bow; he is a coward to threaten a woman; let him remember that the Rose of the Rosebud once saved the life of the Crazy Horse; if harm befalls the Rose he will not forget, but hunt the Long Bow to his grave."

"The Long Bow knows no fear; the Rose of the Rosebud does not love him—she must die."

With a strong, quick motion he drew her toward him, and the tomahawk whirled in air, while a shriek burst from the maiden's lips.

But the tomahawk did not descend, for the cry of the Rose was answered by a dozen fierce yells, and as many painted warriors sprang into the open space.

But the Long Bow was not to be thwarted, for, with an answering yell, he seized the maiden in his powerful arms, and bounded away with the speed of a deer.

The form of Long Bow was herculean, his strength gigantic, his speed of foot wonderful, so that, burdened as he was, he kept ahead of the braves in hot pursuit.

But gradually his pace, and the weight he bore, began to tell upon even his giant frame, and slowly his pursuers drew nearer, until at length, like a wolf caught in a trap, he turned at bay upon the very brink of a high precipice.

In the wondrously bright moonlight he stood revealed, holding the maiden with both arms high above his head, with the evident intention of hurling her down to death from the dizzy height.

With wild yells the warriors rushed forward in a vain effort to save her. The savage nature was maddened, and the huge chief swung the graceful form of the maiden out into fearful space, while a shriek of despair burst from her pallid lips.

## CHAPTER V.

OLD SOLITARY ON HIS MUSCLE.

In the shadow of the gorge, overhung by the precipice upon which stood the huge chief,

Long Bow, and his intended victim, were encamped two soldiers and a Crow Indian—scouts from the command of General Crook, whose force was not many leagues distant.

Well aware of their close vicinity to an Indian encampment, the three men were concealed in the brush at the base of the opposite side of the gorge, waiting for something to turn up in the way of news, with which they might return to their commander.

Worn out with fatigue, the two soldiers slept, while the untiring Crow kept watch.

Suddenly a burst of wild yells put the three on the alert, and a few moments after there came before their vision the tall form of Long Bow, carrying in his arms a human form.

Startled by the sudden apparition, they looked upward in doubt as to the purpose of the Sioux, who stood plainly relieved against the moonlit sky; but when they saw him, with a wave of his powerful arms, swing the human freight he bore above his head, one of the soldiers threw his rifle to his shoulder and fired with the rapidity of thought, for he saw that it was a woman in the power of the savage warrior.

The ball fell below its mark, even as did a shot fired the next second by the Crow Indian. Then, just as the Rose of the Rosebud swung off into space, they saw her flight in mid-air suddenly checked by some mysterious cause, and with surprise almost amounting to superstitious terror, they beheld her swing backward, and disappear in the shadow of the trees that grew near the brink of the precipice.

But they could not see the baffled, wondering look upon the face of Long Bow, who stood, almost stupefied with amazement, staring around to solve the inexplicable mystery.

It was only for an instant that the thwarted warrior stood in doubt that was allied to terror.

Recovering his self-possession, he turned and dashed back into the gloom of the timber, determined to discover, if possible, the manner of the strange rescue.

He did not count upon the fact that his pursuers were now almost upon him, until an arrow came whirling over his head.

Then he saw their numbers and knew that the moment for a desperate conflict had come.

For a second he seemed as if about to face the band of braves, and meet them single-handed; but another thought caused him to bound away in rapid flight, for he felt that nothing was to be gained by a fight on the cliff—everything was to be lost.

The approaching Sioux found the Rose at the foot of a huge tree, whose branches jutted boldly out toward the cliff.

She seemed somewhat bruised, and more shaken, but she was not seriously hurt.

The method of her escape was a mystery to them, and the girl did not attempt to explain it.

Among the Sioux was Biting Wolf, and he ordered his braves in pursuit of the flying Long Bow, while he remained to aid the frightened girl back to her tepee in the village, a league away.

As the chief and the maiden left the cliff, and the scene was once more in the calm quietude of night, a dark form came stealing cautiously down from amid the branches of the large tree, at the foot of which the Sioux had found the Rose of the Rosebud.

As he struck the ground he gave a low chuckle of satisfaction, and began to deliberately coil a long horse-hair lasso.

Having looped it to his satisfaction, he fastened the coil into his belt and muttered forth:

"That's it, fust, last an' all ther time. Old Solitary ar' allers thar—he ar' a rip-roarin' ole catamount, he ar', an' a tough big hoss on wheels."

"Cud 'a' tuk in ther red-skin cuss slick as er whistle, ef it hadn't a-bin fur the rackit."

"Didn't know, altogether, ef it 'd make me popler with ther reds, ef they 'd heerd my rifle a-speakin' hereabouts, they 'd 'a' nosed me out, shure-pop."

"But I throwed ther lariat purty, you bet! How ther gal looked when she comed swingin' back frum purgatory, for she 'd 'a' gone thar, sartin, ef I 'd not nosed her slick—an' Lord luv us all, and ther devil take the hindmost, but how ther red 'd look! He 's skeered to death, you bet!"

"But them reds ain't so smart as they mout be, fur they didn't nose out who did that shootin'—p'raps they didn't hear it, kase it was down yender in the gorge."

"Wall, I heerd it, an' I seed the glitter o' brass buttons, or I'm a liar, they's as durned a set of fools as I is, to cum this near to an Injin camp."

"But this ain't a-gwine to do—no, no, nary time; so, Old Solitary, you jist git up an' skoot."

It was certainly high time for the scout, for such his appearance proved him to be, to either re-ascend the tree or leave the spot, for the Sioux were returning from the pursuit of Long Bow—nay, they were already near at hand.

The man gave a searching glance around him, and flitted away into the thick darkness of the timber on the mountain-side.

As he glided, rather than walked, along, he muttered to himself:

"It's jist ther same, white-skin, nigger, or red, wharver yer find 'em, ther 'pears to be a woman 'mongst 'em, a-shakin' up the durned kind o' a row, an' ther wust of it ar, Ole Solitary ar' jist as bad as enny on 'em."

"Great grizzlies! my heart 'peared to be a-tryin' to git out o' my skin, when I see that red riz that purty gal up to throw her overboard; you bet I couldn't stand it, to see the peert-lookin' squaw-gal go under, an' so I jist jined in ther row, an' ef I 'd 'a' got my ha'r riz, I 'd only myself to blame."

"Ef 't had bin my pard, now, he 'd 'a' let her went, you bet, and p'raps I 'd better done the same, for, ef that gal blabs, an' ther durned red-skins strike my trail, why I jist git my ha'r cut an' no charge; 'twill be done for love, you bet."

"But she seemed like a 'mazin' nice gal fur a woman, she did, fur weemen folks are the devil an' no mistake, kase don't they raise all ther rows ther is?"

"Yet the gal 'beyed me nice, you bet, when I whispered down to unlet go my lasso-ropo from 'round her waist, an' thet I was her best friend."

"She did as I axed her, an' no questions axed nuther; but then she moutened b'lieved me, an' mout blab yit; thar ain't nothin' whole-souled in a Sioux Injin nohow."

"Wall, I'll not strike the trail o' them durned fools who fired the shots at ther Injin. I'll jist look up my pard, an' then we'll see what they is doin' heur so far from home. Ther's more trouble a-brewin', you bet, an' I'll jist look up my pard."

The scout crept cautiously on in the darkness, with a skill and noiselessness that proved him a master of woodcraft.

When he had traveled a mile up the crest of the ravine, he came to where the trees were quite thin, and grew close to the brink of a perpendicular chasm.

As he sped along, he felt conscious that he was nearing the scene of a deadly conflict, for there came to his ears the sound of combat.

"Pard's struck ile, you bet," he whispered, and then dashed forward, revolver and knife in hand.

Before him, upon the brink of the canyon's wall, three men were knit together in a battle for life.

At a glance he saw that one was the man he had referred to as his "pard," and the same glance proved to him that the other two were Sioux—and it seemed to him that one of them was the identical Indian from whom he had rescued the Rose of the Rosebud.

Who the other was he had no time to guess—perhaps one of the pursuers of Long Bow, who had joined forces in an attack upon the white man, upon whom they had accidentally stumbled.

Long Bow and the pale-face were firmly clenched together, and their movements were so quick and vigorous that the second Sioux had no opportunity to use his knife, while he clung to the white man.

So engrossed were all three in their deadly work that they failed to notice the approach of the man who called himself Old Solitary.

But, as they struggled on the very brink of the precipice, they were quickly made aware of his existence, for he sprang forward and seized the foot of the white man with an iron grasp of his left hand, while he raised his revolver in his right and fired full in the face of one of the Sioux.

Instantly, with a death-cry, the Indian threw himself backward, clutching harder in his agony the enemy he held, and over the fatal brink went the three.

Then came a sudden wrench, as the scout's grasp upon his comrade's foot was felt; but the hold was not sufficient, yet it had its effect, for the red-skin who had received the shot was jerked loose from his grasp upon the white man, and clutching again in blind death-agony seized hold of the other Sioux, and together the three went down, leaving the scout flat on his back, his companion's moccasin in his clenched hand.

## CHAPTER VI.

MAKING TRACKS.

We will now return to Ned Wylde, the daring boy who so skillfully rescued himself from deadly danger by springing upon the little brown mustang and dashing across the prairie.

He had not ridden far before, to his joy, he discovered that his steed was as fleet as the wind, and was distancing his pursuers.

Still urging on his pony, he felt that he was safe, and with almost boyish glee burst out in a triumphant laugh.

But it was suddenly checked, as he beheld a horseman appear over the roll of the prairie, not two hundred yards away.

Instantly he drew rein, and his rifle swung round ready for use.

The horseman had also halted; but as if satisfied that they were not enemies they again rode forward, for at a glance each had discovered that the other was not a Sioux.

Nearer and nearer they drew toward each other, when, suddenly, a wild yell burst from the boy's lips, and dashing forward he almost shrieked:

"Aha! Hart Moline, I have found you at last."

Cruelly the bit was wrenched in the teeth of the steed ridden by the man; like a pivot the animal was wheeled around, face to the rear, and deep sunk the spurs into the flanks.

Away bounded the startled steed, and a bitter curse escaped the lips of the rider.

"Halt! Hart Moline; for God's sake halt, and tell me what I would know," cried Ned Wylde, lashing his pony as the man fled from him.

"Oh, God! he is leaving me," again cried the boy, and as the fleet animal still sped away from the pony he continued:

"If I kill him, I can never know. But I will bring down his horse," and the rifle was quickly leveled, then followed a flash—yet still the flying steed fled on.

"I will halt and fire—then I will be certain," cried the boy, and he was drawing rein, when the steed in his front was suddenly drawn back on his haunches, the rider turned quickly in his saddle, the carbine-but touched the shoulder, the eye ran along the barrel, and with the flash and report the brown pony dropped dead, hurling the boy over his head.

The boy fell hard, and was momentarily stunned, so that he did not hear the loud, mocking laugh that came back to him from the man he pursued.

At length he staggered to his feet, and his burning eyes beheld, far off upon the prairie, the steed of Hart Moline still flying away.

Near him lay the dead brown pony, and not a mile away came the Sioux band, in hot pursuit; the firing of Hart Moline's rifle had urged them to greater haste.

"Curses on him! he has gone, and I am again almost at the mercy of the red-skins; but I will not say die yet," and away he bounded at full speed, running along in a crouching position, so as not to catch the eyes of his pursuers.

After a run of a quarter of a mile he came to a small ravine, and into this he sprang with alacrity, for the Sioux were still pressing on, with no diminished speed.

Just as he sought the cover of the gulch, the Indians uttered a wild yell; they had come upon the brown pony.

Then they scattered far and wide, and began

\* It is a custom for young Sioux braves in wooing a maiden to throw a blanket over her head as well as his own, and beneath its shelter to tell his love.

—AUTHOR.



to beat up their game, for they felt that he could not be far away.

Once or twice a grim warrior rode within a few yards of the boy, but as keen as was his eye, he failed to detect the crouching figure, though he leaped his steed over the ravine.

Perhaps he recalled the deadly aim and wonderful rifle, and did not care to alone meet his formidable foe.

Then he rode away, and Ned Wyld breathed more easily.

But only for an instant, as another fiercely-painted savage soon came up, and peered closely upon the ground before and upon either side of him.

Nearer and nearer he came, and discovering the ravine, he sprung from his pony, and with the lariat over his arm, jumped down into the shallow gulch.

As he did so, a little form arose before him, a grasp of savage tenacity was upon his throat, and a keen knife glittered in the moonlight.

Then followed the crushing, tearing sound of steel going into flesh and bone, and the knife of the boy was driven to the hilt in the brawny heart of the Sioux.

With a gurgling sound in his throat, a smothered groan from his lips, the Indian sunk down at the boy's feet—a dead man.

Glancing his eyes searchingly over the prairie, Ned Wyld saw that the spot where the boy was, was completely surrounded by Indians, and a bright thought flashed through his busy brain.

In the twinkling of an eye he disrobed the Sioux warrior of his scanty attire, and feeling in the pouch worn at the belt of the savage, drew out a quantity of paint, with which he quickly besmeared himself.

Then he dressed himself up *a la Sioux*, and laughed lightly as he thought what a gay brave he made.

The body of the warrior was then huddled down into the lowest part of the gulch, the lariat removed from his wrist, and, a moment after, the boy was astride of the Indian's pony, that had been so unexpectedly furnished him.

For a while Ned Wyld thought that the pony was going to give him trouble, as he did not seem to like the change of masters; but he soon quieted him down, and began to move out over the prairie.

With head bent down, as though closely on the search, the disguised boy roamed hither and thither, gradually edging toward the outer circle of warriors, and when addressed by any near at hand, replying in a disagreeable kind of grunt.

It was a trying ordeal for the boy to pass through, but he stood it bravely, and chuckled to himself, as he found that he had the open prairie before him.

Just at that moment a wild yell was heard, in the direction of the ravine, followed the next moment by a score of voices joining in wild and angry confusion.

"They've found the dead Sioux—now to make tracks," muttered the boy, and as all the warriors rushed toward a common center, doubtless believing the boy had been captured, that fearless youth skimmed away over the prairie, as fast as the nimble legs of his little pony could carry him.

Before him was a hope for life—behind him was certain death.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 348.)

## SLUMBER SWEETLY.

BY COL. FRENCH.

Slumber sweetly, little darling:  
Put your pretty doll to rest;  
Climb into your mother's bosom—  
Lay your head upon my breast;  
Gently close your tender blue eyes,  
Dream as only child can dream,  
For your life just in its blooming  
Is the sunshine's early beam.

Slumber sweetly, precious darling,  
While your heart is free from care—  
All too soon you will awaken  
In life's strife to take your share.  
Then while flowers line your pathway  
Slumber sweetly, take thy ease—  
Let the future bring its trouble;  
For the present all is peace!

## BIG GEORGE,

## The Giant of the Gulch:

OR,  
THE FIVE OUTLAW BROTHERS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,  
AUTHOR OF "LITTLE VOLCANO, THE BOY MINER," "OLD BULL'S-EYE," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XIII.

HOT WORK!

RED PEPPER was not in an enviable state of mind as he left the box and passed downstairs. He looked fully as ugly as he felt. He cursed the mad passion of Big George for the "dough-faced baby," to which all this trouble and uneasiness might be attributed; he cursed Estelle for not answering his message in person, thus putting an end to all trouble; he cursed Little Pepper for his obstinacy for not agreeing to postpone his "bit of amusement" until a more opportune moment; and capped the climax by cursing everybody and everything collectively and in general, as he pressed his passage through the densely crowded aisle toward the side-door above which gleamed the facetious legend:

"FOLLOW YOUR NOSE TO THE BAR!"

There was little unnecessary resistance to his passage. Rough and ready as most of the diggers were to draw knife or cock pistol—to fight at the drop of a hat—none among the jostled ones seemed eager to avenge the affront. Not only had Red Pepper repeatedly proved his prowess as a fire-eater, but, like coyotes, the desperado family always hunted in packs. No one cared to start the cause, good though it was. Few men care to twist the rope that is to hang them, knowingly.

Chafed though he was, Red Pepper still had self-control enough to confine his aggressions to curses and a few necessary digs with his elbows whenever the crowd was unusually dense. Though nothing would have been more welcome than a scrimmage, just then, it might prove fatal to his hopes of yet entrapping the woman, and loyalty to Big George held his passions in check.

Reaching the door, he passed through a dark and littered room, full of angles and nooks, into the noisy bar-room. His appearance created quite a sensation. Every voice was still as if by magic, every eye was turned upon him, some half-defiantly, others with an uneasy look which spoke plainer than words.

Red Pepper grinned; all the more disagreeably from its being forced. He knew that the party had been conversing about him or his brothers when his entrance interrupted them; possibly of the clever manner in which the young gymnast had foiled his attack, the night of the dance. At any other time he would

have asked for nothing better; there would have been brave matter for the gossip, fresh food for the flourishing grave-yard on Cinnamon Hill.

Instead, Red Pepper passed up to the end of the bar nearest the wall, thus guarding his rear. Leaning against the counter, one hand resting upon his hip in close proximity to his revolver, the giant insolently scrutinized the group, finally uttering:

"You fellows slide up yere and drink 'long of a man. Tom," turning toward the bar-keeper. "Tom, you bear-eyed, yo-necked, cat-hamned, mutton-headed, flat-eared, crooked-shank-ed, long-legged son of a hop-top you! sling on your pizen—lively, thar!"

The insulting invitation or rather command to drink was complied with, such was the force of the desperado's reputation. The miners drank in seeming amity with the man whose throat they longed, yet feared, to tear.

"Now you fellows kin go on with your talk," grinned Red Pepper; "which you dropped when I came in. Don't be bashful." Then turning to the bar, he paid for the drinks, adding: "Give me one 'o them tickets. I'm goin' in to see the gals."

A placard posted at the bar, read—"No admission behind the scenes without a pass signed by the manager. Price five dollars."

"The world's comin' to an end when he buys tickets!" muttered Green Persimmons, whose puckered visage had earned the sobriquet. "They's music in the air—you hear me!"

But this sagacious prophecy was uttered too low for the giant's ears, as he left the bar-room and paused while the doorkeeper unlocked the door leading behind the scenes. A loud burst of music caused Red Pepper to pause. He knew that George Mack had come upon the stage, and that he would have little spare time, unless, which was very unlikely, Little Pepper would allow his victim to escape him after all.

Red Pepper had formed no plans. So far he had acted solely on impulse. If he could only find the woman! Once face to face, it would go hard but he would succeed, even though he had to fight his way out to the horses.

He knew nothing of the lay of the ground beyond, nor did he stop to consider how he was to leave the building with his prey, in case he should make Estelle captive. The red-haired giant was no cool plotter.

He hurried into a dark, narrow passage, pressing doggedly on. Fortune favored him in this. The passage led to the green-room, as the dim light soon assured him. Just beneath the smoking lamp were the words, "WYNEN ROOM." And, peering through the half-opened door, he caught a glimpse of two persons seated at one of the tables. An evil glinted his eyes as he recognized the woman he sought. But—her companion? It was the doctor—C. F. Parmley—otherwise Little Cassino. An ugly suspicion flashed through the desperado's mind.

"Him an' her! Ef he's been playin' bugs onto us!"

The two were evidently on good terms—even confidential. Red Pepper grew hot as he remembered the unexplained noise that had interrupted Big George while giving them their instructions. If the doctor had eavesdropped then, and then carried Estelle the information—that would explain why she had not fallen into the cunningly baited trap. Grating his teeth, Red Pepper grasped the butt of a revolver. But he did not use it, just then.

Then came the shrill yell as Little Pepper flung his knife and severed the trapeze rope, closely followed by the heavy thud as the luckless gymnast was hurled down, head-first, to the bare, hard floor of the aisle, cleared by the horror-stricken spectators not a moment too soon to save their own precious carcasses, at the expense of George Mack's. Then came a moment of breathless silence.

Little Cassino and Estelle sprung to their feet, the latter pale and palpitating. One brief moment of horrible doubt—then the dread truth flashed upon her mind as loud cries came from the theater.

"George—merciful God! he has fallen!" burst from her lips, as she sprung around the table.

"Wait," cried Little Cassino, catching her arm. "Let me go first—there may be some trick in this."

"He has fallen—let me go! he may be dead—dying—and I not there—let me go!" gasped the woman, struggling to free herself.

"Look to her, girls," cried the doctor, to the terrified ballet girls, who, womanlike, flocked around the nearest man at the first alarm. "Keep her here until I get back—ah! look out!" he added, as the table was overturned and the light extinguished by its fall.

Freeing Estelle, he darted to the door, but Red Pepper met him at the entrance, pistol in hand. Only for a defective cap, the thread of Little Cassino's life would have been cut short then and there. With a furious curse at his failure, Red Pepper shifted his grasp and dealt the doctor a crushing blow upon the head, felling him like a log. Then, with a howl of joy, he spurned the quivering body with his foot, and rushed into the room, seizing Estelle in his arms, holding her easily as a child, despite her desperate struggles to escape.

"Hold your hush!" he snarled, furiously, as she shrieked aloud in her agony of mind at being kept from the side of her suffering or dead husband. "Hold your yamp, or I'll wring your neck like a chicken!"

Brutally compressing her throat, he stifled her screams while tearing the shawl from her shoulders and enveloping her head with it. Then, knowing that the alarm must have been given, he rushed to the door, catching his revolver. But the struggles of Estelle still bothered him, and in the semi-darkness, he stumbled over the prostrate doctor, falling heavily, at full length, the shock knocking down the lamp, which was shattered upon his head, the oil and bits of glass half blinding him.

Freed from his arms, Estelle scrambled to her feet, screaming loudly, in concert with the ballet-girls. Cursing furiously, Red Pepper sprung up, the shawl still in his hands, and after a brief chase succeeded in catching his prey, this time dealing with her in a still more summary manner.

One heavy blow upon the head effectually silenced her screams and struggles. Flinging the limp, nerveless figure upon his shoulder, holding his pistol ready for instant use in case necessity demanded it, the ruffian hastened along the dark passageway. There he paused, with an oath.

The alarm had been given, though for a time it had been overpowered by the tumult beyond; yet not one minute had elapsed since the first alarm, so rapidly had the different changes occurred. But now, shouts of a far different cadence came from the stage and the barroom. The shrieks of the terrified women had been heard, and aid was approaching.

Matters looked dark for Red Pepper, yet he never flinched, nor for one moment did it occur to him to abandon his prey and secure his

own escape, as he could easily have done, by mingling with the crowd. He was a true bulldog.

Standing in one corner, he waited as the men came rushing on. The darkness favored him beyond his hopes. Ben Coffee and half a dozen others passed him, and the way of escape seemed free. Red Pepper darted forward, with clenched teeth. He reached the door in safety. Two paths lay open before him. The bar-room was one. The other, longer, led to a side-door, opening upon the alley. Along the latter passage he pressed. But the momentary hesitation proved disastrous. A loud yell told that he was discovered. He turned, snarling. The tall bartender was raising a revolver. Quick as thought the giant fired. A horrible scream, and another murder was added to the long score against him.

Rushing along, Red Pepper found the door securely fastened. Mad with impatience, he kicked it heavily, but though the barrier rattled, it held firm. And from close behind him came the sounds of pursuit; the heavy tramping of feet, the loud, angry voices.

A grating curse parted his lips as he recognized the voice of Little Cassino, crying:

"Take him alive—don't burn powder—you'll hit the girl!"

Plunging forward, with the rush of a wild bull, the giant struck the door with his shoulder, splintering the pine planks and bursting the hinges, carrying the fragments into the alley with him. With crushing force he fell, increased by the lifeless form upon his shoulder, losing his pistol with the shock. Bewildered, half-stunned, he groped around for his weapon, when, without warning, several dark forms sprung across the alley upon him, their knives gleaming wickedly in the starlight.

Stung with madness, as a knife pierced his side, Red Pepper hurled the enemy aside with one mighty effort, then grasped the woman once more, drawing another pistol and discharging it pointblank in the face of his most audacious assailant.

How it was done, he scarcely knew, but a strong hand tore the lifeless figure from his grasp, as his legs were knocked from under him, and he fell among those who had issued from the building. But the giant was not subdued as yet. Leaping up, he flung aside those who had sought to confine his arms, then leaped away down the alley like a deer, despite the revolver bullets which were sent after him.

"On—after him!" yelled Little Cassino, leaping forward, pistol in hand. "Don't let him escape us, now—hal! listen!"

One—two bright flashes came from the shadow beyond; as many sharp reports. Then a hoarse yell, a shrill scream—a brief struggle. And as the party sprung toward the spot, they heard a long laugh, as the thud of a horse's hoofs filled the night air.

## CHAPTER XIV.

LITTLE CASSINO FALLS HEIR TO A PRECIOUS LEGACY.

WITH a fierce, grating curse, Little Cassino sprang forward, at the head of his little party, though feeling that they were too late—that the red-haired giant had fled. The late defunct, taunting yell had proceeded from his lips; this, together with the rapidly lessening thud of iron-shod hoofs, spoke only too plainly. Not far did Little Cassino run. In the darkness he trod full upon some yielding substance, only saving himself from falling by his catlike activity.

"Look out!" he cried, excitedly. "There's dead meat lying 'round here loose. Strike a match, some of you; maybe it's our man—if it isn't, then he's got clear off this deal."

"It's a nigger—or a greaser!" sniffed Dandy Dave, as the flickering match expired.

Little Cassino struck another match, and stooped over the body. Faint though the light was, he saw enough. That huge form, the heavy, repulsive features, the deeply-scarred face, the goggle-eye, now glazed and sightless—it was all that remained of the giant half-breed, Muerle.

A frightful gash laid bare his chest. Death must have been almost instantaneous.

"That settles it!" uttered the doctor, in a hard, unnatural voice. "The dog has escaped us, for this once. Let him laugh while he can. Our turn comes next—"

"Who was the female critic, anyhow?" demanded Dandy Dave. "Tall come so sudden I hadn't had time to find out which end I'm standin' on. When I heard them gals-a-squeal in, I didn't stop—"

"The little Scotch girl—the one you gave your shirt—"

"Oh, h—!" fairly howled Dandy Dave. "An' I didn't know it—an' that dirty cuss has kerried her off—an' we let him! Somebody chaw me into fiddle-strings—rub me down with a brick—do somethin' to make me feel meaner'n I do now. She stole away by a pizen snake like him—an' we stannin' yere like two-legged hitchin'-posts—good Lord! pour down red-hot pokers an' little imps to use 'em ef we don't hustle aroun'—"

"Wake up, you fellows—all them as call 'emself 'n' a feller me!" howled the excited digger as he started down the alley at the top of his speed, in the direction from whence came the last beat of hoof-strokes.

"Let him go, boys," shortly laughed Little Cassino. "Cool and easy goes further in a day than hot and hasty. It's headwork that will count in this game. We can't take the trail until daylight—"

"Doc—thank God! I've found ye!" spluttered Ben Coffee, coming up. "You're wanted—quick! Poor Mack—"

"Then it was him—I feared as much. How did it happen?"

"Murder—cold-blooded murder, that's what's the matter—a devilish trick as ever was! And he, poor fellow! the best card I ever held—just my dadrum crooked luck! I wish to ge-mently I'd never struck the town—the pizenest hole this side of—"

But Little Cassino did not pause to listen further, and "cursing a blue streak," the manager followed hard upon his heels. With difficulty the doctor succeeded in making his way to where the injured man lay—upon the stage, where he had so recently stood, a model of superb strength and manly beauty, bowing low to the enthusiastic applause of the audience; and now—a bruised, bleeding, mangled ruin!

"Stand back—give the man air!" sternly cried Little Cassino. "Do you want to destroy his last chance? Air—air!"

"You hear the boss!" bellowed burly Cotton-top, swinging his ponderous arms around like battering-rams. "Give us room—plenty o' room—you, Tumle-bug! scrounge back, thar, fo' I light onto ye! You ornery cusses act like you'd never bin brought up a-tall!"

"What's the show—will he pull through, think?" anxiously muttered Coffee, as the doctor knelt beside the body. "I knowed it! jest my pesky, crooked luck!" he groaned, as Little Cassino silently shook his head.

The sight was not so repulsive, now that the doctor had wiped away the blood and dirt from the gymnast's face. A long gash upon the back of the skull, a few bruises upon the

shoulders and one side; this was all that the unprofessional eye would have seen. Far different with the doctor. His eye looked deeper. There were terrible internal injuries. In falling, the gymnast had struck against the corner and back of one of the benches. His death was inevitable—his moments were already numbered.

"It'll kill his poor wife—you know he was married? I wonder where she is—I haven't—"

"You don't know, then?" quickly interrupted Little Cassino, looking up. "She's gone—stolen away by that devil, Red Pepper—"

"That does settle it!" gasped Coffee, suiting the action to the words, and squatting upon the stage in a crumpled heap of utter disgust. "I won't kick no more. You fellows kin git the hearse ready soon 's you like—I don't want to breathe any longer."

His words were unheeded. At that moment the injured man moaned feebly, and quivered as he vainly strove to lift his head.

"Easy, lad," soothingly uttered the doctor. "Take it cool—you've had a little accident, that's all. You'll be all right, pretty soon."

"Estelle—where are you? I can't—can't see—"

"She'll be here in a moment—don't worry—take it as easy as you can," added the doctor, a queer sensation in his throat.

If heard, his words were not heeded. The poor head rolled feebly from side to side, the glazing eyes moved restlessly as though seeking for the dear face they would never again behold in life—his feeble voice faintly whispered the loved name—Estelle, nothing but Estelle.

None knew better than the doctor how vain all human skill was—that the dread flat had gone forth—that the young gymnast was dying. And knowing this, he thought only of soothing the poor fellow's last moments. Motioning Cotton-top to take his place, and showing him how to support his head, he pulled Ben Coffee aside.

"Wake up, old man—don't be a fool! Hunt up some of the girls—bring one here. A steady, cool-headed one, if you can. Lively, now—don't you see the man is dying?"

Thus spurred, Coffee obeyed, returning in a few moments with a middle-aged woman. To her Little Cassino spoke, in a low, earnest tone.

"You hear him—calling for his wife! She cannot come—you must take her part. Wait—it is nothing so dreadful. He is blind—dying. He cannot see—he never will know the difference. It is a pious fraud, for he will die happy. You are strong enough for that! You mustn't speak—only let him hold your hand and think you are his wife."

"I will do it—never fear me, sir," was the subdued reply, as she moved forward and knelt beside the dying man.

"Estelle—my wife—I thought you would never—come!" whispered the gymnast, his face calming as though by magic.

The touch of her hand seemed to infuse new life into his veins. His voice grew clearer and stronger. His words came easier.

"I am dying, little one—don't cry. The best of friends must part—and God is good: He will let us meet again, never fear. I wish I could stay with you longer—always. Life has been very sweet—since I knew you. Ah, there is something rising and choking me—I can hardly breathe! But listen—I must speak quick. This is a bad place for such as you. You must leave this—this life, I mean. The 'old man' will give you my salary—that will take you to my people. Promise me you will go! Promise—"

"She will—I give you my word, friend," interrupted Little Cassino.

"Doctor—thank God! you are here! Give me your hand—and, little one, yours. There!" he added, joining their hands. "I leave her in your care, doctor. You have—proved a friend to—us both. Estelle, wife, trust him; he will not fail you. Doctor, as you deal with her, so may—God deal with you!"

"I accept the trust," solemnly uttered Little Cassino. "If I fail her—your wife—may God desert me in my hour of need—amen!"

A faint sigh of intense relief, then George Mack lay quiet, like one dead, save for his labored breathing. For several moments thus—then he suddenly sat up, a wild light in his face.

"Estelle—my wife—God of mercy protect her! save her from that—oh—hold me! I am falling—falling—"

A burst of blood checked his utterance. One convulsive shudder, then his head fell heavily back.

The young gymnast was dead.

A worn and faded flag covered the dead. The stage was cleared. Men stood around in little knots, conversing in whispers. But then the oppressive silence was broken by a loud cry from old Bart Noble.

"Look yander! see that knife—thar's a clue fer ye!"

All eyes were turned upward; following the direction of his outstretched finger, the men saw a broad-bladed knife sticking between two of the boxes, its point deep buried in the soft pine. A wild yell arose as they read the truth.

"Hold!" shrilly cried Little Cassino, his voice arresting the rush as though by magic. "One hasty move may destroy all. Let us make sure of each step as we go along. Who among you saw the knife thrown?"

No one replied. Though a hasty examination had shown them that the fatal rope had been half severed, until Bart Noble's discovery not one had even suspected that the devilish deed had transpired before their very eyes.

Was the trapeze in motion, or stationary, when the rope broke?

To this question there was but one answer. The ropes were still.

"That is enough!" cried Little Cassino, exultantly. "We can easily tell from which box the knife came, by drawing a line from the weapon to the trapeze, then to the spot from whence it was thrown. Easy, now. Let me pass, please. The murdered man was my friend—you all heard his words—and I claim the right to take the lead in bringing his assassin to justice."

"That's the talk! c'lar the way, fer we're comin'!" yelled Cotton-top, using his broad shoulders with good effect.

Little Cassino led the way up the stairs, and quickly marked the box from whence the knife had been thrown. They could even tell the exact spot where the assassin had stood.

"Thar's only one thing more," said Bart Noble, quietly. "Ef anybody kin tell us who tuck this box fer the night, I reckon we won't be far from findin' the right cuss."

The doorkeeper was questioned, but he could not answer the question. There was little regularity observed above stairs. The miners, having paid for box-seats, made the most of their privilege, often going the rounds, dropping into a box whenever or wherever they recognized a friend. But the avengers were not long at a loss. A witness was at hand.

"Let me pass—I kin tell—I know it all!" cried a shrill voice, and, breathless with his

struggles, the shock-headed waiter boy reached the box.

"I kin tell," he panted. "I fetched up drinks yere jest afore he fell. They was two, at fust, but the big, red-headed gnoot went down-stairs, leavin' t'other alone—a little runt of a—"

"Little Pepper, by—!" cried Bart Noble. A wild howl arose—a yell of bitter, deadly vengeance—a yell that meant bloodshed. The long pent-up storm was loosed at last. Woe unto the Pepper brothers!

But the tumult was quelled in a strange manner. In a shrill tone Bart Noble cried aloud:

"Good heavens! look at the Doc!"

Staggering blindly, Little Cassino fell heavily to the floor, lying like one suddenly stricken with death!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 345.)

## The Phantom Spy; OR, THE PILOT OF THE PRAIRIE.

BY BUFFALO BILL,  
(HON. WM. F. CONY.)  
AUTHOR OF "DEADLY EYE," "THE PRAIRIE ROVER," "KANSAS KING," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XXIV. THE ATTACK.

"The Prairie Pilot would see you, sir," "By Heaven! the Prairie Pilot," cried Colonel Radcliff, springing up from the table where he was breakfasting with Ruth, who turned deadly pale at the news brought by the orderly.

It was true; the Prairie Pilot had boldly ridden into the fort and dismounted before the headquarters of the man who had exiled him from the border, and offered a reward for his head, dead or alive!

Dismayed at the fearlessness of the famous scout, the denizens of the fort stood around gazing upon the intrepid man, and wondering what would come next in their frontier drama.

"Scout, you are bold to thus place yourself in my power," said Colonel Radcliff, quietly, greatly to Ruth's surprise.

"I have not done so without a purpose, sir; will you hear what I have to say?" calmly said Prairie Pilot.

"Assuredly; come in."

"Colonel Radcliff, I have come to tell you that the man I killed in front of your fort was an outlaw, and against all such I wage a deadly war. Upon him I found communications, the contents of which you will know."

"Acting upon them I bade Bravo Bob, Yankee Sam and Scalp-lock Dave meet me at my retreat, in the hills, and without telling them the contents of the letter I had, I arranged with them a plan for the capture of the Hermit Chief and Captain Ralph."

"It cannot be done, scout."

"Pardon me, colonel; it has been done."

"What! those two men have been captured by you?" cried the officer, in evident alarm.

"Yes, sir, they are now prisoners in my retreat, under the guard of all such I wage a deadly war. But listen, Colonel Radcliff, until you hear all."

"To get the old chief and his son in my power, I wrote him an answer to his note, purporting to come from you, and, as I am a good penman, I imitated



Leaving a proper force to garrison the place and secure the horses, stock, and booty of the outlaws, also to look after the wounded, Captain Ashland at once started upon his return with the bandit prisoners, guarded by some twenty troops.

Returning with him was Prairie Pilot, who carried a large tin box which he had taken from the cabin of the old Hermit Chief.

#### CHAPTER XXV. PRAIRIE PILOT'S STORY.

In the cabin home of Prairie Pilot, the second evening after the fall of the outlaw stronghold, were gathered several persons, bending over a form reclining upon the scout's rude cot.

The recumbent figure was the old Hermit Chief, and his face was pallid, his brow damp with the approach of death, for an ugly wound in his side was dripping out his sands of life.

Bending over him were Bravo Bob, Scalp-lock Dave, Yankee Sam, Captain Ralph and Ione—the two latter with pale, saddened faces.

"Yes, you have done for me; I have not long to live, and your cursed bullet has ruined my every dream of the future," groaned the Hermit Chief, turning his burning eyes upon Yankee Sam, who replied:

"I'm sorry, pard, durned if I ain't; but yer was about makin' tracks, yer know, so I let yer have the contents of ole Heart-seeker, an' she's a weepin on don't say fall, often. I'm as sorry as tho' it wur my own mother-in-law, durned if I ain't."

"Well, as you have given me my death-wound, curse you, go to the fort and tell Colonel Radcliff I would see him; and quick, or it will be too late."

Yankee Sam started quickly to obey, but at the door started back, for on the threshold stood Prairie Pilot, Colonel Radcliff, Amos Arlington, his daughter Ione, and Ruth, who had just arrived.

"Hail the Hermit Chief!" cried the scout, catching sight of the recumbent form.

"He's done for, pard—he went to sleep, an' I gin him a pill from ole Heart-seeker, an' it done the biz."

Prairie Pilot sprung past Yankee Sam, and with an exclamation of horror Colonel Radcliff rushed forward, crying: "My God! has it at last come to this? Would to Heaven I had been spared this sad scene."

"Arthur, thank God you have come, for I would see you ere I die—oh, God! this bullet is burning up my very vitals."

"Be calm, sir; your talking causes you greater suffering: what you would say, I can say for you, and if I err you can speak," said the stern, deep voice of Prairie Pilot.

"Who are you that dares to say he knows aught of me?"

"Listen, and you shall hear, for I have a story to tell that interests nearly all present."

"Will you hear me, Chief?"

"Yes; but my life is ebbing fast, and—"

"I will not linger in my recital," began his deep, clear tones, Prairie Pilot, and his piercing eyes bent upon the old Hermit Chief.

"Eighteen years ago, there lived on a plantation home in a south-western State, a gentleman by the name of Herbert Lyndon."

"His family consisted at that time of his wife and two sons, the elder, named after his father, twelve years of age, and the youngest, a mere infant of three years."

"Into the neighborhood there came a physician, a widower, with a son of twenty years of age."

"Commencing to practice his profession, the physician was soon doing well, for he was generally very popular."

"Among his most intimate friends were Mr. Lyndon and his wife, who respected and regarded him most highly, and through the influence of the planter, the son got an appointment in the army."

"Other than to say that the youth was a good soldier, though a little wild, and ran off and married a young school-girl, I have nothing more now to relate of the son; but of the father I have much to tell."

"When Mrs. Lyndon gave birth to a little girl, the man I speak of was the attendant physician, and doubtless his skill saved her life. Better had it been had she died then, for, ere she recovered her former good health, her husband sickened and died suddenly."

"It was a terrible blow to the loving wife; but, in all her sorrows and troubles, her physician was her devoted friend, and so kind did he seem, and so noble, that in a little more than one year after the death of her husband, she married the man, whom she had really learned to love."

"Shortly after his mother's second marriage, Herbert, the eldest son, was sent to Europe to finish his education, his stepfather so desiring."

"Several years passed away, and one night an attack was made on the gentle Herbert by an assassin; but the would-be murderer had not calculated his victim's remarkable strength, and was made a prisoner by the man he would have slain."

"With surprise, the young man discovered his intended murderer to be an American, a wild boy, the son of his late father's plantation overseer."

"Inquiry caused the truth to come out—the young man had been hired to kill Herbert Lyndon, his employer being the man he had loved next to his own father."

"To escape being handed over to the authorities, the young man confessed all, and at once Herbert Lyndon set sail for America, accompanied by his intended assassin."

"Arriving at home a terrible blow fell upon him, for he found his mother dead, and stepfather gone, carrying with him his little brother and infant sister."

"None could tell where the physician had gone; but the sudden death of his wife caused suspicion to rest upon him of foul-play, and he had feared detection and fled."

"Herbert Lyndon at once had the bodies of his parents exhumed, and a scientific examination discovered that they had both been poisoned."

"Oh, God, have mercy! have mercy on me!" groaned the old, gray-haired Chief; but after a short pause the Prairie Pilot continued:

"The cause of this double, and intended treble murder, was then evident, for the will of Herbert Lyndon left all of his vast wealth to his wife, and in case of her death, to his children."

"The three children had also inherited a large fortune from their grandfather, and his will was, that, in case of the death of any of the children, those remaining should have the share of the deceased equally divided among them, and that they should claim their fortune only when the youngest of the children should become of age."

"By his murders, the cruel stepfather hoped to possess the wife's property, and then the wealth of the two children, the boy and the girl, whom he intended to mould to his wishes."

"Fearing punishment for his crimes, the

guilty man fled, carrying with him the boy and the girl."

"Infuriated against his step-father, Herbert Lyndon swore revenge, and commenced to seek the guilty man, to punish him, and gain possession of his brother and sister."

"For two years Herbert Lyndon tracked him from place to place, to at last find that he had been one of a train of emigrants going West, who had all been supposed to be murdered by the Indians."

"Mourning the loss of all he held dear, and tired of a life in the cities, Herbert Lyndon became a prairie-hunter, and for years has passed his life upon the prairies and in the mountains of this far Western country."

"A strange fatality seemed to direct his life in this, for, by so becoming, he found out that the wagon-train, in which were those he sought, and whom he had believed murdered, had fallen, not by the Indians, but by the bold plan of one man, who, with a few desperadoes, had killed all the emigrants and plundered them."

"That man was the step-father of Herbert Lyndon, and from the attack on the train, he became an outlaw."

"Locating himself in the mountains, and gathering around him a bold set of renegades, he waged a relentless war for plunder."

"In this outlaw camp he brought up the boy and girl whose parents he had murdered, and if they, under his training, did wrong to many, they cannot be condemned for so doing, for their supposed father led or drove them on."

"Now my story is ended, and in that man you behold the author of all these crimes; in me you see Herbert Lyndon."

"Doctor Roger Radcliff, have I spoken the truth?" and Prairie Pilot laid his hand on that of the old white-haired chief.

But he started, while a general murmur ran round the room—for Roger Radcliff was dead. Quietly, with the voice of his accuser ringing in his ears, he had passed from life into eternity.

#### CHAPTER XXVI. CONCLUSION.

In the little valley, where Prairie Pilot had his home, Roger Radcliff was consigned to his last resting-place, and above his remains was erected by his son, Colonel Radcliff, a white board, with the following simple inscription:

"ROGER RADCLIFF, M. D.  
"Died September 29th, 1854."

The surprise and delight of Ralph and Ione knew no bounds, at having found a loving brother in the Prairie Pilot; but the maiden had heard all before from the lips of the scout.

Colonel Radcliff, though pained to the heart at the evil course of his father, warmly congratulated Herbert Lyndon, Ralph and Ione, and again and again begged the scout to forgive and forget the past, adding:

"To atone for my crime toward you, whom my father has so bitterly injured, I give you one whom I love more than all else in the world, for that your hearts are one I well know. Come, Ruth, if Herbert will have you, I give my full consent for you to be his wife."

Herbert Lyndon drew the blushing maiden toward him, while he said, softly:

"You have already promised me, have you not, Ruth?"

"Yes; even when an unknown scout I loved you with my whole heart," was the prompt answer.

Now that Amos Arlington was aware of the strange circumstances that had made Ralph Lyndon an outlaw chief, he gladly forgave him the past, for he knew that the young man would lead a far different life in the future, and the decision of her father rejoiced Ione, for she had never ceased to love her dashing, handsome husband, outlaw though he was.

"There is one little outlaw I would like to trail to the altar," said Bravo Bob, ruefully glancing toward Ione Lyndon, who held down her head, while her elder brother replied:

"Her heart is already in the fetters of love, I am certain, Bob, and I freely give my consent, for you are a noble fellow, and though a little wild once, you have reformed now, and must return to your Kentucky home, and show them what a lovely wife you found on the border—and more! tell them that she is an heiress, for Ione is a very rich young lady, I assure you," and Herbert Lyndon drew his beautiful sister affectionately toward him.

Yankee Sam and Scalp-lock Dave, having been pledged to secrecy regarding all that had transpired, and presented with a handsome present in gold, by their old comrade, the Prairie Pilot, the whole party left the retreat and his strange secret behind them, and set out for the fort, where they fortunately arrived without adventure.

Until the close of the Indian war Colonel Radcliff determined to remain commandant at the Blue Water post, and Prairie Pilot and Bravo Bob would not desert him; but when the hatchet was at last buried, he resigned his commission, and accompanied by his daughter, Prairie Pilot, Ralph and his lovely bride, Bravo Bob and Ione, he started eastward, Yankee Sam and Scalp-lock Dave escorting the party to the border of civilization, and there bidding them farewell, for they would not give up their life upon the prairies of the West, even to witness the wedded happiness of their old comrade, Herbert Lyndon, once known as the Prairie Pilot.

#### THE END.

### Great Adventurers.

JOHN SMITH,  
The Founder of Virginia.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

ADVENTURE in the New World, for a hundred years succeeding its discovery, was chiefly directed to the search for sudden wealth. All classes of people were possessed with the idea that somewhere in America gold existed, pure, in vast quantities, and every voyager entertained the hope that he would strike the coveted country of gold, and thus be enriched even beyond the riches of Peru and Mexico.

But voyage after voyage only revealed a great land, with thousands of leagues of sea front, rich in forests, but peopled with savages, and no gold or precious stones rewarded the greedy searchers. After awhile some of the most enterprising men in England, like Sir Walter Raleigh, conceived the idea of colonies in America which should become the centers of trade as well as points from which to explore.

This sagacious man sent out several expeditions and formed a settlement (A. D. 1585) on Roanoke Island, but it lived only one year, when the colonists returned to England. The half left behind were all butchered by the savages. A second settlement on the same spot, under Raleigh's auspices, was made 1587, but it was eventually abandoned; and nothing was thereafter done until 1602, when some adventurers, headed by Bartholomew Goswold, ran

over the Atlantic, and made a somewhat successful voyage by returning, after a four months' absence, with a cargo of sassafras. Several similar successes followed, and when Smith arrived in England, as we have seen, in the year 1604, the question of settlement in Virginia was then being vigorously discussed.

He entered into the scheme with much zeal. Young in years, ardent in temperament, hardy of body, and ambitious, he here saw opened before him a new career, and, after much difficulty, succeeded, with a few others, in organizing an expedition for taking permanent possession of the country between the 34° and 38° parallel (Cape Fear to Maryland), under a new royal charter, granted by King James.

This expedition, composed of three little vessels—the largest about one hundred tons burden!—sailed in December, 1606. It was composed of but one hundred and five colonists—of whom forty-eight were "gentlemen," men both unused to work and who held themselves aloof from it.

The whole force seems to have been of most inharmonious and discordant elements. Fierce quarrels ensued, in which Smith so asserted his authority that he was put in close confinement for sedition, and so remained all the rest of the voyage.

Proceeding by way of the West Indies, the expedition finally arrived in the vicinity of Roanoke—but got to north of it, when a storm drove them in shore, and by mere accident the vessels ran into the great harbor of the mouth of the river Powhatan (now James). The splendor of the land induced them to run up the stream for forty miles, when the vessels were moored to trees, and the settlement of Jamestown commenced (May 13th, 1607).

Smith was permitted on shore in this arrangement, still being under arrest on charge of treason and sedition. As soon as the king's secret orders were opened, when a landing had first been made, it was found that Smith had been named one of the Council of Seven, but this did not effect his release until after the Council had organized, when he demanded his formal trial, and, after a thorough hearing, was declared not guilty; and ere long became one of the leading spirits of the adventure.

Taking twenty men and Captain Newport—chief officer of the fleet—he scouted the river to the village of Powhatan. This chief resided on the river, at "the falls," near where Richmond city now stands. The old Indian there lived in savage pomp, with his harem of forty wives and his body-guard of one hundred, the sole sovereign of about eight thousand men, women and children. This "emperor" received his visitors courteously, and with some ceremony. He permitted them to voyage on up the river at their pleasure, with the treacherous purpose of massacring the settlers in their absence. This attempt was made, but was frustrated by the vessels, which opened their guns and quickly scattered the terrified savages, who thereafter had a wholesome dread of the "thunder-guns."

Returning in safety, Smith was compelled, by the incompetency of the Council, to assume acting charge of affairs, and soon placed Jamestown in good condition to resist any Indian attack. Newport sailed for England, with the three vessels (June 15th), thus throwing the colonists wholly on their own resources. Sickness soon ensued, until half the men were disabled. The Indians were, however, friendly, and brought in provisions that saved the whites from starvation; and then Smith, taking the pinnace, with seven men, started down the river to get corn and food by barter with the Indians below (at Hampton). The savages, however, showed fight, and the English, driven by their needs, accepted the challenge, and fired a few pistol-shots, which at once brought the red-skins to terms and friendliness and barter.

In this manner he proceeded on various voyages, up the several rivers, to new tribes—everywhere making friends. His trouble came from his own followers. A conspiracy was hatched, which Smith fortunately suppressed, and the ringleader, Captain Kendall, (a member of the Council) was hanged. The summer of 1607 passed in explorations, and the fall came with an abundant supply of wild game, fish, fruits, etc.

Smith now started up the Chickahominy river to explore, and in this trip, by the disobedience of his men, he was captured, and one of his men put to horrible torture, by the chief, Opechancanough.

Now a prisoner, his brave bearing won the respect of his captors, and he was kindly treated. Indeed, he sent a note, by three of the savages to Jamestown, giving information of his captivity and his orders to his followers.

He was taken around as a kind of show through the various villages of Powhatan's tribe, and had numerous ridiculous and perilous experiences, when he was at length conducted to the "emperor," to be received in great state by the right-royal old red-skin, surrounded by his court and his numerous wives.

The aim and hope of the Indians was to obtain from Smith some knowledge or means whereby to obtain possession of the fort at Jamestown, but the Englishman's shrewdness and courage did not fail him. He would reveal nothing; and, after a long and singular interview, by means of signs, figures, and words, the Indians counseled together; two great stones were brought in; Smith was seized and thrown down, and his head drawn back upon the stones, while a huge warrior, armed with a big club, advanced to become executioner, by beating out the captive's brains. At this moment, Pocahontas, the favorite daughter of Powhatan, a child of ten years, sprung from her father's side, and rushing up to the prostrate prisoner, clasped his head in her arms, and bending over it, protected him from the fatal blow. The chief evidently was delighted with this spirited conduct of his child, for he immediately ordered Smith's release, and gave him to Pocahontas to be her slave.

This act was succeeded by expressions and acts of friendship, and it ended by the captain's return to Jamestown, but twelve miles away. Disensions and mutiny continued among the settlers, which Smith quelled with a firm hand. Captain Newport returned before the end of the winter, and the savages now being friendly, everything seemed to promise well. Visits were not infrequent between Smith and Powhatan. Smith had, in his seven weeks of captivity, so well learned the Indian language that he conversed with much freedom with the chief, and they arranged for a mutual compact against Powhatan's enemies, the Monacan tribe, on the head-waters of the James river. But, in the very middle of the winter, a fire came to destroy the huts and magazines of provisions in the settlement, by which the colonists were subjected to great privations and dangers. This again evoked the spirit of mutiny. The old opponents of Smith gained great ascendancy, and for a while it appeared as if the Indians had but to strike to end the colony.

But, a second vessel came in, opportunely, with six months' provisions and one hundred and twenty new men. The town was rebuilt, and Smith announced himself to Powhatan as ready for the march against the Mon-

acans. But, the savages were now saucy. They were incensed that Smith refused their demands for swords, knives, and tools, and stole all they could lay hands on. Then they began to seize them from the hands of soldiers and workmen, until their insolence compelled the English to drive them from the settlement. But blood was thus created, and nothing more was said of the march against the Monacans. Powhatan finally sent Pocahontas to heal the trouble, and to her Smith generously gave up several Indians taken in their rascallities.

Smith escaped the weary round of trouble at the fort by a voyage of discovery up Chesapeake Bay. In a boat of three tons burthen, and with a crew of fifteen, he made a thorough reconnaissance up the east shore, to a point opposite the Patowmack (Potomac) river; then he crossed over and passed up this great stream, as is supposed, a considerable distance above where Washington City now is. Several encounters with the Indians occurred, and Smith then learned that all the tribes in that section had been instigated by Powhatan to kill him, and that a conspiracy had been formed among the tribes to destroy the colony.

On the return, following down the west line of the great bay, Smith discovered and named most of its rivers, headlands, inlets, etc. He was stung by a *sti-gray* fish, and came so near his death that he selected the spot for his grave, on the island off the mouth of the Rappahannock river; but as in other cases of extremity, the Providence that was over him interposed at the last moment; a "soothing oyle" was found; the inflammation in the dreadfully swollen arm subsided, and he voyaged homeward, well-content with his twenty-one days' adventures and discoveries.

He returned none too soon, for the colony was again found to be discreditably disorderly. This trouble he immediately quelled, and returned (July 24th, 1608), after only a two days' rest, to prosecute his discoveries in the Chesapeake. These investigations, pursued in the midst of great peril from the watchful savages, resulted in the discovery and exploration of the Patopso; and the Susquehanna was finally seen. This celebrated voyage revealed to the world all the features of that great inlet of the sea, with its vast river system, on whose shores and banks a mighty people were soon to swarm. The map he then constructed is still an admirable prediction of the bay.

On his return Smith was formally given the presidency of the colony, and from that moment it seemed to spring to new life. Captain Newport once more came in from England with seventy more men and provisions, but also with independent powers that gave Smith great uneasiness and trouble. One absurd scheme was the coronation of Powhatan, which folly was carried out, rather to the old Indian's disgust than pleasure. It did not prevent the treacherous old scamp from playing double, but Smith was too much for him always. The story of the contest of wit and strategy between these two is both amusing and highly illustrative of the two races.

It is perhaps needless in this sketch to dwell upon the succeeding twelve months' conduct of the colony. It was so full of trouble, contention and work for Smith, both with his own men and the red-skins, that we cannot wonder he was glad to be compelled, in the autumn of 1609, to return to England. A bag of powder on which he was reposing in a boat, in coming down the James river, exploded and burned and lacerated his body so severely that he handed over his colony to a trusted agent, and in the six years following remained in England, recuperating his shattered health, writing out the history of his life, and informing his mind with books.

But he could not rest. In 1614 he was again afloat in a voyage of commercial adventure to the New England coast. This had highly favorable results, and he made a second trip, but only to be taken prisoner by the French and carried to France. From thence he made his way to England to once more try to raise a fleet, well armed, to trade with New England for furs. But he did not succeed, and he there remained until his death, in 1631, noted as a person of influence and consideration.

#### THE LESSON OF THE DAYS.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

When the russet leaves are falling  
In the sun's declining light,  
And the lonely bird is calling  
For its mate to take its flight;  
Oh, its sweetly sad to gaze  
On the dying autumn days!

When the flowers chilled and faded  
Lowly droop their lovely heads,  
And by ashen clouds are shaded,  
While a gloom a scene o'er spreads.  
In their whispers breezes sigh,  
Autumn days are passing by!

When on bird-deserted bower,  
We sit and hope of the "dying wine"  
Of the glorious passion flower,  
Rays of hazy moonlight shine;  
To sadness tunes the happiest mind  
In the chill autumnal wind.

Thus are seasons gliding ever  
To the soon forgotten past,  
Borne like waters of a river  
To Time's ocean deep and vast.  
As the leaves from trees are falling,  
So our strength will drop away.  
But let us not be friendless calling  
On life's fading autumn day!

### Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

#### THE LESSONS OF THE LEAGUE CAMPAIGN.

The first campaign under the banner of the Professional League Association has ended, and its close leaves affairs in anything but a satisfactory condition. For the first time in the history of the regular professional clubs, the season closes with great pecuniary loss to a majority of the clubs entering the lists in the championship pennant contests; and what is worse the past season has been characterized by more pool-gambling, more "crooked" play and more "revolving" in the professional arena than ever before known. The race for the pennant, too, closes in a way satisfactory to none of the three leading contestants, while not a single club in the League arena can see anything pleasant from a retrospective glance at the proceedings of the past season, or from the result of the campaign under League auspices. The policy of a high tariff of admission adopted by the League has proved to be a very damaging one, pecuniarily, to the interests of every club in the association. But one club has a surplus of receipts over expenses, and but one other has cleared its expenses; all of the other six having sustained losses, while one became bankrupt long before the season ended. The "whitewashing" of suspected players which characterized the League's plan of operations, has proved still more disastrous to the welfare of the professional clubs than the adoption of

the high tariff of admission, inasmuch as it has imperiled the reputation of all the clubs, and led to a demoralizing doubt of the integrity of play of any professional nine in the arena. Then, too, the season's experience has conclusively shown that the League rule of allowing club managers to engage the services of players for an ensuing season during any part of an existing season is one which renders it impossible to preserve that control of a nine so essential to proper training, discipline and government. The facility, moreover, which the League rules gives for "revolving" is another drawback which has helped to make the position of affairs at its close so decidedly disadvantageous to the best interests of the professional class of the fraternity. All these mistakes and blunders in running the Association machine during 1876 are simply the result of a lack of experience in the framing of laws, rules and regulations for the government of any base-ball organization of the kind. The gentlemen who entered upon the experiment did so with the best of intentions, but like all who go into a new business and trust only to their own limited experience in what they undertake, they failed to succeed. No doubt the lessons which the events of the past season have taught them will be duly profited by, and better results may be anticipated for 1877. Unfortunately, however, they have placed new barriers in the way of a reform of existing abuses which will delay improvement for at least a whole season, for it will take a whole year's honest play to get rid of the doubt thrown upon the general integrity of the whole professional class by the crooked work of the knavish minority of 1876. But this is the first and most important work of the coming Cleveland convention of December, 1876. All other subjects to be discussed are of minor importance. Cutting down the price of admission is but a mere step in the path of necessary changes. What is now wanted is faith in the integrity of the play of the contesting clubs of the coming season. Just as one suspected man in a nine damages the reputation of the whole team, so does one unreliable club ruin the whole professional class in the estimation of the reputable patrons of the game. Facts are facts, and the managers of the existing League Association can no more ignore the facts of the campaign of 1876 than they can the pecuniary losses the respective clubs have sustained. The coming Cleveland convention must not only lower their tariff to twenty-five cents, but they must throw out of their midst every "suspected" player and every "marked" man, whose pool-gambling proclivities and disreputable antecedents render him one of the black sheep of the professional flock.

The season's experience has conclusively shown that the game itself is in higher favor with the public at large than ever before. Moreover, it has been equally shown that under the existing code of rules a higher standard of fielding and batting skill has been attained than ever before reached. More clubs took part in the season's play of 1876 than were ever before organized, and a far greater number of games were played than ever before recorded in the history of the game. From Maine to California and from Canada to Texas has base-ball flourished in 1876 as the permanently established national game of the American republic. Other sports have had their "rise, progress and decline." A furore for this, that and the other exercise, sport or pastime has prevailed and then the pet of the day has lost public favor. Not so with base-ball, however. This only increases as the field of operation enlarges, and while we have boys in America, or our people retain their present love of out-door sports, base-ball will continue to be the game of our people. This fact only shows how necessary it is that honesty, wisdom and judgment should prevail in the councils of the fraternity, especially in reference to the class who make the game a means of livelihood or of pecuniary gain. The game will live despite the blunders of its rulers; but to make it flourish and be a credit to its votaries existing abuses must be removed.

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## CHILD AND MAN.

BY EREN E. REXFORD

Robert, when he was a child,  
At his play about my knee,  
When I looked at him and smiled,  
Often came and said to me:  
"When I get to be a man  
I will love no one but you."  
And I answered: "If you can,  
Make your promise good and true."  
Years went by, and Robert grew  
Nobly up to man's estate,  
And I waited, for I knew  
That he could not yield to fate.  
Yet he often said to me,  
As he kissed me on my lips,  
"I have said, and you shall see,  
That no love shall yours eclipse."  
But there came a time when he  
Lingered often from my side;  
And I thought of fate's decree,  
And for love I could not chide.  
Much I missed his handsome face,  
But I knew he loved me still;  
Young hearts have an empty place,  
Which another heart must fill.  
Came one day to my side,  
And he kissed me on my brow.  
"Mother, I have won a bride,  
Can you love another now?"  
And his handsome face grew bright  
With a shy, glad look of pride,  
As I answered: "I have quite  
Room enough for Robert's bride."  
Ah, I knew! the heart of youth  
Years for more than mother-love!  
Can we put aside the truth  
Which is whispered from above?  
Man must seek himself a mate—  
Some young heart to fill his own,  
And his is a lonely fate,  
Who must live his life alone.

## THREE

## Links in Love's Chain.

BY GRACE MORTIMER.

## LINK THE FIRST.

"TILL A' THE SEAS GANG DRY."

## CHAPTER I.

In Stokington, an English seaport of no note whatever, once lived a pair of lovers—a sailor and a village maid. They had made a great secret of their "sweet-heating," for a very excellent reason—the heroine of the idyl happening to be entirely dependant upon an ancient aunt who was hotly averse to her making anything but a good match—the hero in the meanwhile being naught as to cash; therefore, never a gossip in all Stokington guessed that the wedding-day was fixed, and that Mary Lee was going with Ned Morris on his three years' cruise to the South Seas. Such a goodly lad was Ned! Such a dainty flower was Mary!

The Stokington maids roundly and fervently expressed their admiration of him; while not a bachelor in the village could see fair Mary flitting by without casting sheep's eyes at her.

In view of the coming bridal they were one evening sauntering along the sands, bare hand in bare hand, as simple folks will, when Ned says, trying on a bit of the sensational:

"Mary, do ye know what I heard in the village to-day about you an' me? That you'd taken up with me all on a sudden, just for to play me off ag'in Squire Glover. That's cause we walked home from church together last Sunday."

Now I can't tell you how this village girl loved her lover. We all sing the luring, passionate love songs, but how seldom come the wild words true in real life!

Yet I firmly believe that the fresh and the true love with just such fire and fidelity—

"Till a' the seas gang dry,"

and so loved Mary Lee.

For him—I do not know: he admired her; splendid creature, who would not! and he hung breathless on every look and word, and yet—

Mary, her dark cheeks glowing like the lip of a foreign shell, and her great, rich black eyes darting a glance into his that would charm a St. Simeon Stylites off his pillar, says:

"Playing you off against Squire Glover, hey! Humph! so you gossip about me! Well now, how d'ye know but I am?"

"Any other girl would have sent such a blubbery craft far astern when she'd got the offer of a three-decker like him," says the sailor, ruefully. "I ain't much of a catch, my dear, am I?"

"No," reply the velvet lips, demurely, "not much. Really, I think I am foolish—though it isn't too late to mend. I haven't said no yet; and when I think of the grand house"—

affecting to ponder—"and the servants, and the carriage and pair—"

"Belay there! mayhaps some day I may get ye all them things," cries Ned, jealously.

"—And the county gipsy," and the countess continues the young gipsy, "and the house in London, and the silks, and jewels, and laces; and all ready to my hand if I only answer the squire's letter with a 'yes'—"

"Only ye couldn't act the black-hearted part, Mary," puts in Ned, devouring the brilliant, drooping face of his sweetheart.

"—With a 'yes,' she goes on, "instead of a 'no,' as I mean to do for your sake—why, am I not silly to stick to you, Ned—to you?" she suddenly lifts her face, perfectly resplendent with love's glory, and blots out the very memory of her teasing words with a love-look—which piece of mute oratory Ned proves himself capable of appreciating by clasping her, regardless of all *les convenances*, to his broad breast, and pouring blessings on her head for an act of true love too seldom rivaled, fair ladies, in Tyburnia and Belgravia.

"My pretty darlin'!" mutters Ned, feasting his eyes on the fair form endowed with a soul as fair, "how could I doubt ye for a moment? Haven't I known ye ever since ye was that high?" leveling his brown hand above the sixteen inches above the sands, "an' did ye ever deceive me, fun or 'arnest? Never, my darlin'! never! An' never will I give ye cause to rue that ye chose the sailor lad above the gentleman's head; no, my bonnie Mary—"

"Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,  
An' the rocks melt w' the sun;  
Oh, I will love thee still, my dear,  
While the sands of life shall run."

The pretty wail was still dropping flatteringly from her lips, and his arms were still about his sweetheart, when a female Stokingtonian came around the black sea-bluff plump upon them, and then transports vanished, of course.

This fresh arrival was not exactly a Venus de Medici in cornelian, inasmuch as added to the strange spell of her classic outlines and transparent glow of coloring, a sprite of alluring coquetry lurked in her gem-blue eyes, and her delicate limbs were draped in inartistic folds of the linsey-wolsey sacred to her class.

Folks in Stokington used to call Mary Lee, with her jet-black locks, and Lucy Corrie, with her gilded tresses, the fairest pair that ever God fashioned; and each was wont to treat the other with marked respect, as being her only peer in the village.

They were neighbors, and that, among such, means intimates.

When, therefore, Mary Lee, turning hastily from Ned's encircling arm, caught sight of Lucy Corrie standing like a statue and staring at her and Ned as if she had just dropped upon two beings from the moon, whose peculiarities froze her with horror, she exclaimed, with friendly interest:

"Well, Lucy, have we frightened you? But it's all right, we're to be married a Tuesday; I told aunt this morning."

This address, though meant to calm the discreet alarms of Lucy Corrie, seemed to overthrow and rout her utterly; she turned pale as ashes, faltered something inaudible, and darted away, leaving the pair where she had found them, utterly dumbfounded.

Mary recollected herself first.

"Oh, I must see what she's doing," said she, darting off in her wake.

"I'm coming in this evening," shouted Ned after her. "If your aunt don't like it she must lump it."

Mary threw back an aurora smile at him and ran on.

Ned stuck his hands into his trousers-pockets, squared his massive shoulders, and softly whistling:

"Oh, my love is like a red, red rose!"

looked after her straight, lithe, gliding figure with proud eyes of possession until it disappeared round the next bluff, and then he looked at her slender footprints on the tawny beach, little slits of shining water that the cream-white surf rolled up to kiss and rolled back from leaving no trace; and then he strolled up from the beach and finished the song on the moor.

## CHAPTER II.

MARY caught Lucy behind the rocks.

She was standing beside one of those black pools which the sea loves to scoop out under the cliff—they call them "jugs" at Stokington, and avoid them with simple awe, supposing them bottomless—on the sandy brim of this stood Lucy, like a white heron watching for fish.

"Dear heart! Lucy Corrie, do ye see where you're standing; and—my goodness! what's the matter with ye, at all?" exclaimed Mary, forcibly struck with a certain raised, panting and tragic air which the little beauty wore.

"Will ye do this, Mary darlin'?" she cried, half-frantic, "oh, bless ye, bless ye, kind, good Mary! But, alack!" she wailed, with a sudden gust of tears, "though you may give me back his body, ye cannot give me back his heart. That ye will keep forever, Mary Lee."

Mary started and fixed a wild, anguished gaze upon her.

"His heart?" she whispered, with white lips; "to be sure, isn't that mine forever and ever?"

"It once was mine!" wroth Lucy; "oh, Mary, can't ye lift the glamour off him, you that knows so well how to lay it on, and give him back to me, honest?"

Mary trembled in every limb.

"Will ye do this, Mary darlin'?" she cried, half-frantic, "oh, bless ye, bless ye, kind, good Mary! But, alack!" she wailed, with a sudden gust of tears, "though you may give me back his body, ye cannot give me back his heart. That ye will keep forever, Mary Lee."

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Mary trembled in every limb.

"Will ye do this, Mary darlin'?" she cried, half-frantic, "oh, bless ye, bless ye, kind, good Mary! But, alack!" she wailed, with a sudden gust of tears, "though you may give me back his body, ye cannot give me back his heart. That ye will keep forever, Mary Lee."

Mary started and fixed a wild, anguished gaze upon her.

"His heart?" she whispered, with white lips; "to be sure, isn't that mine forever and ever?"

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me that ye'll never say aught to him about me, or as sure's death in I go, and ye may screech yourself hoarse as a crow, they'll never hear you till I'm a woolf corpse."

"Well, well, I will not," cried Mary, blown about at Lucy's will by the immediate fear of a tragedy; "but, oh! lass, what am I to think? Ye've blackened my love before my eyes, and ye dare me to say a word; what then, Lucy Corrie, would you have me do?"

"Give him back to me!" wailed the girl, with passionate importunity. "What do you want with him? Ye have offers a-plenty, an' the quality at your feet. Oh, give him back to me!"

Mary stood transfixed. If Lucy Corrie had asked for a hand or a foot, she would cheerfully have cut it off and given it her, but to ask for the very core of her heart—how could she give her that?

Mary was what you call a woman of boundless and impulsive generosity, of that crystalline simplicity which judges others by its stainless self, and without one spark of self-preservation.

All that such a woman could do in this dilemma was to believe every word that Lucy Corrie said, and to hasten to the rescue.

"Lucy," said she, "you may have your sweetheart back for me. I wash my hands of him"—she felt as if the words in passing blistered her lips, and she stopped for breath a moment. "I never knew I stole him from you, he vowed so solemn that I was his first love—but now—take him."

She was turning away with a sad face when Lucy sprung round her neck with a scream of joy.

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"To be sure you are!" exclaimed sexagenarian ardor, gloating delightedly over the coil of black hair and column of fair neck which was all he could see; "and now you've given me my answer, we'll have a grand bridal, just as fast as we can get it up. Eh, Mary Lee?"

At that moment came a clear, cheery whistle through the evening air. She started as if an arrow had pierced her heart, and whipped her hand out of the squire's, looked this way and that way, her two hands pressed hard on her bosom; then shuddering—yes, shuddering like a wounded animal—she muttered, hoarsely:

"I'll do whatever ye like, Mr. Glover," and darted into the cottage, just as Ned Morris came tramping round the corner to the music of his tune.

The young lover found an old one leaning over the gate of his "Red, red rose," with a very foolish and sentimental confusion breaking all over his smiling face, and the sight took him considerably aback.

"Evening, Morris," said the squire, blandly. "What, going in?"

"Belay there! and who's a better right?" cried Ned, bluntly, "all night to ye, squire!" and he strode up to the door.

Squire Glover moved off, slightly solemnized. "She'll soon send him off with a flea in his ear, now she's made up her mind to have me," thought the elderly adorer, cosily; "I believe I'll wait a bit for the fun of seeing his phiz when he comes out."

He sat down on a mossy stile, lit a cigar and waited.

(To be continued.)

It is to be feared that they who marry where they do not love will love where they do not marry.—Fuller.

It is more difficult, and calls for more energies of soul, to live a martyr than to die one.—Horace Mann.

"A prudent man," says a witty Frenchman, "is like a pin; his head prevents him from going too far."

Little minds are tamed and subdued by misfortune, but great minds rise above it.—Irving.

Master books, but do not let them master you. Read to live, not live to read.—Casson.



"Ye've stolen my sweetheart, and I cannot live without him."

## Brave Barbara:

OR,  
FIRST LOVE OR NO LOVE.

A STORY OF A WAYWARD HEART.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,  
AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," ETC.

## CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE CATHEDRAL, TEN YEARS BEFORE.

HERMAN RENSELLER was no fool. Dull and slow, of the phlegmatic temperament of his Dutch ancestors, he had also their shrewdness. From the hour that his cousin announced her intention of going to Paris for the *trousseau*, he gave up the suddenly-blossomed hope that she would marry him. He had known, when she said to him that she accepted his offer and would marry him on Christmas, that her actions were dictated by spite against the man she did love; and now, when she invented this shallow excuse for crossing the ocean, he saw in it a deeper meaning than the desire to purchase bridal finery; and he argued from the rashness of the proceeding that his own chances were as small as ever—that some sudden recantation would follow the sudden promise. He believed—that was true—that Barbara had crossed the sea to make some final discoveries with regard to Delorme Dunleath. If these were favorable would not his own chances fail him?

Arguing thus, he was anything but complacent or contented, in the brief absence of aunt Margaret and his cousin.

His discontent was changed into horror when flying rumors of the fate of the steamer reached New York. His uncle was distracted, almost insane; but—more fortunate than others—had only been kept in suspense twenty-four hours, when the telegram came from young Granbury, announcing his child's safety, and the possibility that his sister was also among the saved.

Mr. Rensselaer immediately dispatched the message that he would follow by the first steamer, saying nothing, however, of Herman's determination to accompany him. At first he objected strongly to his nephew's doing so, telling him that he was needed at home to keep affairs in order; but he was obliged to yield to Herman's stubborn resolve to go; and the two got off on the second day after receiving the news.

While they were flying over the wintry ocean, deep as was their solicitude, they could little imagine the scenes in which she, who was

of such interest to them, had already contrived to engage herself.

Other actors in the brief drama of Barbara's love-affairs were living through an intense experience at that very time.

When Delorme Dunleath hurried to the bedside of his suffering child, he met there one who had an equal right beside that dying couch, yet whom it was torture to meet, and especially *then and there*. Oh, for the privilege of pillowing the head of his little son on his breast, and weeping tears over him, unseen by her! Oh, for the privilege of forgetting that she was his mother! But the inexorable fact remained!—nothing, in this life, or in eternity, could change the past.



all her pretty arts, her stolen glances, her accidental meetings with him on the grounds, resulted in nothing better than making Herbert furiously jealous.

They were decorating the grand old cathedral for the Christmas services. The young people of the rector's family, including the curate, assisted the young people of the castle. Several afternoons were spent delightfully in twining wreaths of evergreen and making motes suitable to the occasion.

Herbert enjoyed the preparations more than any one else; for his sister, Lady Grace, was allowed to assist; consequently her governess was free to accompany her, and there, in that dim sanctuary, free from the scolding eye of his mother, he had many delicious opportunities for enjoying the society of the woman he loved. In the midst of the general mirth and activity he could feast his eyes and his heart on the smiles of the charmer.

Their caution became carelessness. One afternoon, in the swift-growing twilight of the brief winter day, the countess came in to observe how the work was progressing. There was much talk and laughter, and a great hurry to get a certain motto placed before it should grow too dark to work. So no one noticed the proud lady as she came silently up one of the dim aisles, pausing by a great stone pillar, to watch them, as two young ladies held up the leafy lettering, while the curate went boldly up a fragile ladder to fasten it in place.

There was a low murmur of voices the other side of the pillar; the countess caught a word by chance; started, listened, bit her lips, and turned pale in the ghostly twilight. Then she inclined her ear, determined to hear all of the murmured colloquy; when it was over, and the motto, meantime, fixed in position, she retired as silently as she came, to her carriage waiting outside.

It was perhaps fifteen minutes before her own young people came out, chatting merrily as they crowded in beside her. It was then too dark for them to read her face, or two of them might have trembled; but the countess had great self-control, and when the charming governess—who had, in the absence of company, the privilege of a seat at the dinner-table—spoke to her ladyship an hour later over her plate of *consomme*, she received a polite and quiet answer which betrayed none of the anger raging beneath that jeweled coronet.

That evening, while the young people were playing blind-man's-buff in the great fire-lighted hall of the castle, the countess, who had sent privately for the curate, was having an interview with him in her own apartments.

The following afternoon her ladyship graciously accompanied the little party to the cathedral, assisting with her own hands at the work of decoration. She was very pleasant. She and the curate had a very lively chat, in the course of which it was proposed that some two of the young folks present should stand up before the altar and go through the ceremony of marriage. Of course the boys and girls thought this would be very amusing; several couples volunteered; but the countess laughingly had her own way, the result of which was that Mrs. Courtenay stood up with Delorme Dunleath, and what Delorme supposed to be a mock-marriage took place. The curate even brought in the parish register from the vestry, and the parties, amid much merriment, signed their names.

"I think Herbert is safe from that adventure now," said the countess to herself, when the pretty little scene was over.

There was plenty of amusement for the remainder of the afternoon. Delorme did not much relish it; for he had an actual aversion to Vivian Courtenay, founded on the advances she had made to him. Herbert, too, was restless; but to the others it was all pure fun.

Those belonging at the castle went home in time for dinner. They were still all seated at the table when the curate was ushered in, who, with much apparent agitation and distress, said that he was afraid their play of the afternoon would turn out but a sorry jest—the rector had just informed him that the marriage he had performed that afternoon was a legal and binding one.

Then had followed a scene where the drama was real enough. Delorme turned pale as a sheet, and swore he would never acknowledge it; the bride screamed and fainted away; most gracefully; while poor Herbert went into horrible spasms before his mother's eyes.

That was her punishment for her heartless and ruinous trick played on her nephew; her son, her darling son, for whose sake she had committed such foul treason, was worse always after that. His love for Vivian Courtenay and his sudden disappointment acted very disastrously on his shattered nerves.

Delorme Dunleath long refused to consider the marriage into which he had been trapped as a marriage. His aunt affected innocence, and it was not until he was older and wiser that he suspected the part she had played against him. The curate, meantime, had his reward in the shape of a handsome living in another part of the country.

It was only by appeals to his honor as a man—by declaring that her heart was breaking—by many long, passionate appeals, and tears, and supplications on her bended knees, that Delorme finally came to yield to the claims of his unloved bride and acknowledge her as his wife. Of course he could, in due process of time, by representing the fraud practiced on him, have obtained a separation; but Vivian appealed to him in such a way that his high and delicate sense of what was due to a woman prevailed over his distaste, and he accepted her as his wife.

Never, for one moment, was he tempted into the union by her charms, or any feeling for her beyond that of a chivalrous pity.

And so they lived together two years as man and wife. But when, years afterward, Delorme assured Barbara Rensselaer—in answer to that proud, exacting beauty's demand—that he had never loved any woman but her, he spoke the solemn truth.

His experience with Vivian Courtenay had given him a fear of her sex which Barbara had been the first to change into love.

A few months after his marriage with Mrs. Courtenay, a son was born. A year after that he detected her flirting with a former acquaintance—an army officer—left her, shocked and disheartened by her guilt, and finally took the necessary legal steps to obtain a divorce. To save her from the temptation of sinning, he made her a liberal provision. He was very fond of the child; and after placing it away from his mother, where it would be suitably cared for, he began a life of travel and constant change.

Delorme had all these blighted years to look back upon as he paced back and forth, that night, in the chamber of the dying boy. That woman had been the curse of a life which ought to have been a happy and successful one. The only bright thing in all their association had been this boy. His thoughts were dark and bitter and hard as he paced the night out.

But they were not as wretched as those of

the guilty and disgraced woman, who could only be allowed the companionship of her child because he was dying, and she could not harm him.

She was getting too *passé* to flirt successfully now—her "occupation was gone"—fading, solitary, despised—what had life for her?

She watched in motionless silence for hours the shadow which flitted to and fro on the wall—that, and the face of the sinking child; while the nurse moved about doing what was necessary.

Suddenly she started up with a loud cry; Delorme came quickly to her side—the boy was dead.

The unhappy mother threw herself beside the corpse, kissing the still burning cheeks and brow. For a long time her wails were pitiable to hear; Delorme waited patiently until the first burst of grief should subside; and finally the nurse interfered, lifted her from the couch, and proceeded to arrange the hands and feet of the slender, stiffening figure. After this was done the nurse went out.

Then the mother arose and came close to Delorme, looking at him with beseeching eyes. He could not even hold out his hand to her; there was no sympathy between them; he was deadly pale with his own sorrow; but he could not affiliate with this woman.

"I am going to tell you something," she said, in a clear whisper. "The time has come to undeceive you. I am willing you should know the truth now. But even now, in the presence of this corpse, I would not tell you, had not Miss Rensselaer—who still loves you—saved my life at the risk of her own. It is only as if I told it to her, that I tell it to you. The boy, lying there, was my child, but he was not yours. He was my cousin's. His mother knows it. Yes, the proud countess knows. She overheard us talking in the cathedral, and to save her son, she sacrificed you. You have that to thank her for."

"I ought to curse her," he said, in a low, steady voice, "but I will not. The Lord has cursed her. Her husband—her fair little daughter—are dead. Her son is worse than dead. Oh, I pity her! But you—you are more criminal than I imagined you, Vivian! Poor boy, I am glad you are gone out of this wicked world before you learned the stain that rested on your birth," he added, tenderly, glancing at the face of the dead child.

"In the presence of that hovering spirit will you not forgive me?" whispered the woman, trembling before him. "Forgive me, and I will go away, and lead a better life—I shall never hear from me, or be troubled by the sight of me again."

"I do forgive you, then," answered Delorme, with an effort. Even as he spoke the nurse returned, bringing with her Lady Alice's desperate message, by telegram: "Unless you are at the cathedral at eleven to-morrow morning, it will be too late."

It was long past midnight when he read the dispatch.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

##### BEFORE THE ALTAR.

The two carriages from the castle reached the cathedral at about twenty minutes past eleven. Lord Ross lifted the half-fainting form of his daughter to the pavement and offered her his arm. Mechanically little Alice laid her cold hand upon it; her great blue eyes, bright with the fear which raged in her brain, wandered up and down the road and into the vestibule of the building.

She was looking for Delorme.

As her father began to walk into the vestibule she hung back, but he dragged her on, saying and doing nothing to attract the attention of others, but forcing her along by his side. Behind them came Herbert with his mother; after them such of the servants as had been able to get away.

"Oh, papa, wait a moment," gasped Lady Alice, in the vestibule. "I—I think I have lost—"

"Your handkerchief again?" said her father, with an evil smile. "Never mind—we will find it afterward; and, if you do not behave yourself now, Alice, you will repeat it," he hissed at her, under his breath. "No fooling. I will not stand it."

She cast a piteous, appealing, agonized look into the hard face of the one who should have been her protector—it was cold and firm as steel.

Another quivering, agonized look out into the road.

"Alice, my child, are you ready?" asked the motherly voice of the countess, behind her. "Marie, come here, and arrange the bride's train; there are no spectators, but we desire our daughter to look her loveliest."

The maid spread out the long white train of satin and lace, and gave her young mistress the handkerchief she had let fall. Herbert stood by, looking, for the moment, every inch an earl, and a bridegroom; but Lady Alice never once turned her blue eyes on him—if she had he would have seen how she shrunk from him. He knew well that she did not love him; if he could get her and keep her from his cousin it would be all that he expected.

Holding her icy little hand down onto his arm with his other hand, Lord Ross led his daughter into the church. It was like passing the portals of the Inferno to the helpless girl, as she passed under the arched way into the mellow, warm, softened atmosphere of the cathedral, the rich light of the "storied windows" pouring over her slender figure, in its white, trailing robe, over her golden hair, over her young, childish face, with its burning cheeks, redder than red roses, and into her great brilliant eyes. She shrunk and shrank, but her father dragged her on up the broad aisle; she might have screamed—might have wrenched her hand from him and darted into some corner like a caged bird that can beat its life out in the effort, but cannot escape. But Lady Alice was timid, and used to obedience. She had not the courage to essay strange ways of saving herself. If she was kept from this impending fate, some stronger one must interfere in her behalf; Delorme must come to her rescue, and her wild, bright eyes wandered everywhere in search of him.

The rector and his assistant stood before the altar, awaiting the approaching pair. The countess, her hand on her son's arm, swept majestically up the aisle after Lord Ross. She felt a sense of relief to observe that but one stranger had intruded into the church. She hoped the ordeal of the ceremony would soon be well and safely over—the whole affair had been a strain on her endurance which it would be difficult for her to sustain much longer. Her worst fear was, that Herbert might have one of his attacks, at the very altar; the thought of this danger had worn on the proud woman, who loved her one son all the more tenderly that she could not glory in him as other mothers gloried in healthy, vigorous sons. She borrowed more trouble on this score than on that of Lady Alice's unwillingness.

Lord Ross knew more about that than she did.

Lady Alice saw the stranger, and for one wild instant, mistook him for Delorme, their

figures being something similar. She turned pale and red; but that steady pressure of her father's arm forced her onward to the altar.

Arthur Granbury had a prayer-book open in his hand, affecting to be engaged with it. He arose nervously as the bridal party reached the altar, looking toward the doors eagerly. Where were Miss Rensselaer and the gentleman she was to bring from the train? There were no signs of them. He was not authorized to interfere; nor did he form any plan of action.

The rector stood up in his place, the ill-assorted young pair before him, and the solemn marriage service of the church began. The good, gray-haired old clergyman read out, in the matter-of-course tone of one who attaches no importance to the words, the earnest injunction—"If any one knows any just cause or impediment why these two should not be joined together in the holy bonds of matrimony, let him now come forward, or forever after hold his peace."

"I know of just cause and impediment," cried a clear, vibrant young voice, which, sweet as it was, startled the few on whose ears it fell with an electric shock. "Rector, I command you to pause."

The reverend gentleman and his curate stared in astonishment. A young lady, beautiful, graceful, walked rapidly forward; all turned and fixed their eyes on her pale, glowing face, that shone like a star, with its own inward splendor. She advanced straight to the bride and took her by the hand.

"Come away with me, Lady Alice," said brave Barbara.

"Who are you? What does this mean?" asked the countess, with withering contempt; but her haughty face was blanched with a sudden fear of she knew not what—only, her conscience was not easy, and a guilty conscience is quickly alarmed.

"Bevans!" cried Lord Ross, with so threatening a look at the beautiful intruder, that Arthur started forward for her protection. "Release my daughter's hand, and retire."

"Will you come with me, my dear?" Barbara asked the quivering girl, with the tender air of a sister. "The train was off the track—he could not reach you—but I will take his place. Come, come! do not sacrifice yourself. I will be your friend until Delorme arrives."

"Delorme!" burst from the earl's trembling lips. "Is that the key to this riddle? Away, fool, and leave us together. She is mine."

"Tell this good man that you are being forced into this marriage," Barbara bade the timid creature she was trying to draw away.

"Mr. St. John," commanded the countess, softly, "this interruption is so totally unwarranted that this intruder, whoever she may be, deserves arrest. There is nothing wrong—take my word for it. Go on with the service, instantly."

It is difficult for a rector, even, to disobey a countess. The Reverend Mr. St. John resumed the service, without another look or question to the one who had answered his demand, and came forward to object to the marriage.

"Hold!" cried Barbara, firmly; "it is illegal for you, reverend sir, not to listen to the objection your rites call for. There is a just cause why these two should not be joined in holy matrimony. The young lady is not willing—she is being forced into it by her father, while her very heart rebels and turns away, sick and fainting, from the altar. Lord Ross and the noble Countess of Dunleath both know that she does not love the earl—that she is very unhappy at the thought of marrying him. But, reverend sir, the countess wants a wife for her sickly son, and the honorable lord wants money to pay his gambling debts, and to live on in luxury, and so this child is to be the victim. She came to me last night—told me four miles in that dreadful storm—to ask me to get a telegram dispatched to Mr. Delorme Dunleath, asking him to interfere and save her, if possible, from the marriage arranged for her entirely by these interested parties. She climbed from a window, and made her way to Dunleath inn, in her desperation. I am a stranger. I have no right to interfere, except the sacred right of humanity. I am an American girl, and I can not rest, while one of my English sisters is being cruelly sacrificed to rank and gold. Sold—yes, Lord Ross, as much *sold* as if bartered for in a Circassian, and though the color stained her cheeks, she lifted her pure eyes to his, and they were full of happy light."

"I wish I could crush her, so!" cried the watcher, in a swift and bitter rage, as she crushed a spray of fuschias into a bruised and shapeless mass, and then dropped them on the floor and ground them under her foot mercilessly. "She has always been in my way; always stood between me and the thing I coveted, and now she comes between me and the man I love. I believe I could strangle you, Genevieve Braith, without a pang of remorse—a single twinge of conscience."

The victim was like a tigress crouching for its victim. Her eyes were full of baleful fire. Her hands worked convulsively, as if they were at the throat of the girl in the garden.

The young man bent down suddenly, and snatched a swift kiss from the girl's lips. Her face was like a rose in its sweet confusion. The girl was a woman now; a trusting, loving woman, and though the color stained her cheeks, she lifted her pure eyes to his, and they were full of happy light.

The woman in the shadow of the rose-vines clutched her hands together, and her face was ashy in its pallor.

"Has it come to this?" she cried, and her voice was so sharp in its pain that they heard her, and looked up, but saw no one. "Genevieve Braith, if you win, I lose; and you shall not win!"

If you could have seen Margaret Braith's face, you could have known that she was terribly in earnest. She was not the kind of woman to let any one stand between her and the fulfillment of a plan she had set her heart upon carrying out.

She loved Percy Grayle. He had won her heart without asking for it. If she had not cared more for him than for any other man she knew, she would willingly have given him up to her cousin. But, caring for him as she did, she was resolved to win him if it were a possible thing. Of late she had fancied that he cared more for Genevieve's pretty face than was at all pleasant for her to think of; but she had hoped that it was merely a man's brief fancy. Seeing what she had this morning, she could no longer believe that. Something must be done or she would lose the man she loved, and sooner than lose him she would lose her soul.

Genevieve Braith and her lover came up the path together. She got up and met them on the steps, smiling as pleasantly as if no bitter, evil thoughts were surging under her outward calmness.

"You seem to have found a great many pleasant things to talk about," she said. "I wish I knew what your subjects were."

"Perhaps Genevieve can tell you," Percy laughed. "I am sure I cannot."

"I judge they were not of much importance, then," she answered. "I thought they must have been pleasant ones from the look on Genevieve's face. She always looked as she does now when Rodney Trevor had been visiting her. Have you heard from him lately, Genevieve?"

"No, I haven't," answered Genevieve, with rising color. She knew that Percy Grayle was watching her. Rodney Trevor had been an old lover of hers, but an unsuccessful one. She fancied Percy might have heard of his wooing.

"He is a tardy correspondent," said Margaret, carelessly. "I would tell him so, if I were you, when I wrote again."

Percy Grayle's face lost something of its pleasant look. He wondered if this girl—woman had another lover? He had thought that she loved him, but Margaret's words, and the way in which she said them, implied that there was

#### BARTERED.

BY HENRI MONTCAIM.

What shall be said to-night between us two? I have to thank you for this little grace That you have come to the old trysting-place; 'Tis the last favor I shall ask of you.

I could not brook To leave you to him with no parting look Upon your face.

So stand we here just as one year ago We stood upon this bench. These selfsame seas Crept up to kiss your feet; this same damp breeze Toyed with your hair as it is doing now.

One little year! Oh, God! that I had come and found you here Unchanged as these!

For I am true. Were all I've said unspoken, Think you I would not wish it said again? Think you I love the less because it rains? Though the dear bond that fettered me is broken, Still by this silver sea,

With yonder moon to meditate for me, I ask the chain.

But you are not the same as you were then, Who once so fond art now so stern and cold. You do not thrill to meet me as of old; You are not glad that we are met again.

You will not look at me, But fix your stony gaze upon the sea, Calmly controlled.

And yet, how beautiful this year has been To one of us! Even now methinks I'd choose—Though knowing that I should but love to lose—To draw you closer to me once again;

Just as of old to kiss Your lips—content for one short hour of bliss To bear an age of pain.

Well, be it so! Go sell yourself for gold I would not hold you to your feeble vow. Yet when there burns upon your perjured brow The unallured kiss that marks you bought and sold,

Then you will feel the need Of truer love like mine—your heart will bleed As mine does now.

#### How Death Won.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Two persons were standing in the garden in the sunshine of the summer morning—a girl and a man; perhaps I ought to say a woman and a man; but the figure was so slight, the face so youthful in its innocence, that it hardly seemed to belong to womanhood. It was a beautiful face, softly tinted with rose on the cheeks, and a brighter tint on the arching lips, and eyes as blue as any violets ever are; and like a frame of gold for so beautiful a picture, her hair fell about her face, and was rumpled into a hundred rings of sunshine by the rude touch of the pellicking wind blowing down from the mountain. The man's face was a pleasant contrast, with black hair and beard, and eyes full of dusky shadows; a true Southern face.

As they stood there talking and laughing together, while the flowers blossomed, and the birds sang, a woman was watching them from behind the screen of a rose-vine on the veranda. Her face was fair enough, but just now it was full of jealous shadows.

"How can he fancy her?" she asked herself, as she saw the young man bend down to break a bunch of heliotropes from their stalk and fasten them in her hair. "She is a mere baby; her pretty face and babyish ways have captivated him. What strange fools men are!"

The young man was playing with the girl's yellow hair now; he lifted a strand of it, and let it ripple over his fingers, catching the sunshine till it looked like a tangled mass of spun gold; she, smiling up into his face, was fairer than any roses in the garden.

"I wish I could crush her, so!" cried the watcher, in a swift and bitter rage, as she crushed a spray of fuschias into a bruised and shapeless mass, and then dropped them on the floor and ground them under her foot mercilessly.

"She has always been in my way; always stood between me and the thing I coveted, and now she comes between me and the man I love. I believe I could strangle you, Genevieve Braith, without a pang of remorse—a single twinge of conscience."

The victim was like a tigress crouching for its victim. Her eyes were full of baleful fire. Her hands worked convulsively, as if they were at the throat of the girl in the garden.

The young man bent down suddenly, and snatched a swift kiss from the girl's lips. Her face was like a rose in its sweet confusion. The girl was a woman now; a trusting, loving woman, and though the color stained her cheeks, she lifted her pure eyes to his, and they were full of happy light.

The woman in the shadow of the rose-vines clutched her hands together, and her face was ashy in its pallor.

"Has it come to this?" she cried, and her voice was so sharp in its pain that they heard her, and looked up, but saw no one. "Genevieve Braith, if you win, I lose; and you shall not win!"

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some one else whom she was interested in. When he came to think of it, he remembered that he had heard something of a young man who came wooing, and as he knew that Margaret had no lovers, it must have been Genevieve whom he came to see. Her rosy face was proof that Margaret's words were not meaningless. He lost his faith in her at once. She was not as innocent as she seemed to be. She had deceived him.

"I think I must be going," he said, with clouded face. "I really ought not to come here so often. People will begin to talk about it," he added, laughingly. "But—I get terribly lonesome over at Ashborough's, and there's no other amusement, so I run over here for a chat. I think I must stay away more in future. I wish you would give me some of those carnations by the gate to take to my sister, Margaret."

"With pleasure," she said, walking down the path with him, so delighted at the success of her maneuvering that her pleasure showed itself in her face. "I hope you will not stay away on my account, Percy. I should miss you very much. You are the only gentleman visitor we have that I care to see, and we are such old friends that no one will think of gossiping about us. And so far as Genevieve is concerned—almost everybody knows about that affair of hers with young Trevor, so you need not stay away on her account. When you come to think of it you will see that there is no need of your staying away at all."

"I never knew that your cousin had a lover," said Percy, crushing a daisy remorselessly under his boot-heel. "I remember very faintly of hearing something about a young fellow's coming here, that is all."

"I supposed you knew all about it, or I would have told you," answered Margaret. "I would not have let you run blindly into danger, if I had known how ignorant you were."

"Into danger?" he asked, hardly understanding what she meant.

"Yes—of Genevieve's fascinations," she answered. "Young men, especially the susceptible kind, are quite apt to fall into the snare before they are aware of it."

"You needn't fear for me," he answered. "I have quite a strong admiration for her pretty face, but I trust my heart isn't very deeply involved."

"I am glad of that," Margaret answered. "I have too sincere a friendship for you to see you throwing your happiness away by putting your future into her hands. You don't know her as I do. She is an innocent thing—you men think—but then you see, it needs a woman to understand a woman."

They stood there in the garden and talked for some time. When he went away she gave him a bunch of flowers for his sister, and a little cluster of pansies for himself.

"Let me see, pansies have a language, haven't they?" he asked. "What is it, Margaret?"

"Perhaps you would accuse me of being foolish, sentimental, in giving them to you, if I were to tell you what the poet's fancy pansy-language is," she answered, dropping her eyes before his glance.

"Oh, no," he said. "You must tell me."

"Well, then, if I must I must," she answered, laughingly. "Pansies say, 'think of me.'"

"I will remember that," he said, bending over her in that tender, earnest way natural to some men when they are saying "pretty" things to women. "I will think of you, Margaret. I wonder if you would deceive men as—as some women do?"

"I would be true to the man I loved," she answered, softly, lifting her eyes shyly to his, for a moment, then dropping them again in rosy confusion.

Percy started. Did she care for him! He had never thought of such a thing before. It is always flattering to a man's vanity to fancy that a woman loves him, even if that love is not returned. It was so to Percy in this case. One woman had deceived him, but another had shown him her heart, and it was full of tender thoughts for him.

"I can trust and believe you, Margaret," he said, and bent down and kissed her. The woman's face grew full of triumph and strange gladness at the caress. She would win!

Standing at the window of her room upstairs, Genevieve Braith saw the kiss, and the color died out of her face at sight of it. She had thought Percy Grayle too honorable a man to give his kisses to every woman he met. It was part of her faith that such kisses belonged only to the woman a man loved. He had told her in many ways, if not in words, that he loved her. Had she been deceived in him?

Percy came over as often as ever. He wanted to show Genevieve that his heart had not been entangled by her yellow curls, he told himself. Perhaps he really believed that. But I think he came because some influence with which her child-sweet face had to do, drew him there. He had loved her. He loved her now; and in order to make himself forget how much he had cared for her, he took the surest way of keeping that love fresh. He ought to have known that he could not forget how much he had hoped she might be to him, with her face before him daily, but he was no wiser than other men, and like other men, he was strong in the belief that it is easy to forget a woman when they set about it.

But it was not quite so easy a thing to do as he had thought of. There was some nameless witchery about her which kept him at her side and made him forget, for the time being, all that Margaret had told him. When he went away, and her face was out of sight, he would blame himself for being weak enough to let her see how great her influence over him was, and resolve to be cool and indifferent in the future; but the next day was sure to see him at her side again.



a bitter ring in her voice. "You need make no excuses. If Percy Grayle were going it would probably be clear to you that your duty called you to hunt Ethel's."

"I will go," answered Genevieve, with a sudden, icy dignity, that kept Margaret from making any reply. "It will make no difference to me whether Percy Grayle goes or stays. Perhaps it would to you, however," and with this parting feminine shot, she left the room, just as Percy Grayle came up the steps.

"Good-morning, Margaret," he said. "I have just heard some news, and I came to tell you about it. I think you must have been mistaken in what you told me about Rodney Trevor."

"Why?" asked Margaret, foreboding disaster to her plans from his eager, excited face. "A gentleman came up from the city last night to see my brother, and he told us of Trevor's marriage to a lady to whom he had been engaged for a year," answered Percy. "You must have been mistaken, you see, for he knows the parties well."

"I may have been," she answered. "I know that he came here to see Genevieve, and that he came as a lover; and since then they have corresponded regularly. I never asked her to tell me of her affairs. I took it for granted that he received encouragement, or he would not have cared to write."

"Where is she? I would like to ask her about it?" he said. He believed that there had been a wrong done somewhere, intentionally or otherwise, and he was tired of playing at cross-purposes.

"She has gone out somewhere," answered Margaret. "She is going away to-morrow morning, and I do not know how long she will be gone."

"Going away? Where?" he asked, eagerly. "To stay with an aunt of ours in Virginia, who is sick. I do not know where she has gone now; she will be very busy packing to-night, and as she will leave before daylight, you will hardly have a chance to see her again. Have you any messages for her? I will deliver them, if you choose to leave them in my care."

"I would rather see her," he answered. "I must see her before she goes."

"But you can not," answered Margaret, who knew well enough what he wanted to see her for, and was resolved to prevent any meeting. To allow an explanation to take place would be death to her plans.

"But she would be able to spare me a few minutes of time this evening, wouldn't she?" he asked, desperately.

"I can only repeat what I said before, that she will be too busy to see any one. I have got to help her, and it isn't a very pleasant nor easy matter to get a woman's wardrobe ready for a journey at so short a notice."

Percy was at a loss. There was a question he wanted to ask her, but if he could not see her it must remain unasked for the present.

Suddenly the idea came to him that he could write a note and leave it for her. Margaret could give it to her, and she could leave an answer.

He would do so. He wrote a few lines and sealed them, and gave them to Margaret, who had been watching him with a face fearfully pale. The time for decisive action on her part had come.

"Will you give her this, and tell her that what I have written I would much preferred to have said?" he asked, putting the note in Margaret's hands. "You will not forget it?"

"No, I will not forget it," she answered. "If you have nothing more to say, I shall have to ask to be excused, as there is so much to be done."

"I will not stay to hinder you," he said, and went away.

He came over the next morning.

"Has she gone?" was his first question.

"She has gone," answered Margaret, with a smile that was full of ill-concealed exultation.

"And her reply to my note?"

"She left no reply," answered Margaret, stooping to lift a book that had fallen from the table.

"Left none?" he cried, turning pale. "Are you sure?"

"Quite sure," answered Margaret. "You will be satisfied, I hope, when I tell you that she said she had no reply to make. Oh, Percy, Percy, how can you be so blind?"

"Because I was fool enough to love her, I suppose," he cried, angrily. "I believe you, Margaret. She is not the woman I thought her."

If he could only have known that a little heap of gray ashes on the hearth in Margaret's room was all that remained of the note, and that the eyes he had intended it for had never seen it!

Days came and went. Percy was with Margaret a great deal. In many ways she drew his thoughts from Genevieve, and made him think of her instead. She was tenderly thoughtful of his comfort. She took pains to read the books he liked, and she might talk of them with him. She learned his favorite songs. She did everything she could to show him how much a woman will do for the man she loves. And Percy was not insensible to all this. It is very pleasant to think that one woman's heart keeps you the uppermost place in her thoughts.

And as the days went by Margaret told herself that she was winning the man she loved at last. Before long she would have nothing to fear from Genevieve's witching eyes and sweet child-face. She knew Percy well enough to feel sure that when he had asked and won her promise to be his wife, there would be no danger of his withdrawing from the fulfillment of the engagement. He was too honorable for that.

"A little longer, a little longer!" she cried, one day, with strange exultation in her face, as she watched him go down the garden path. He had left her with a kiss upon her lips.

For his life, Percy Grayle could not tell what kept him from asking Margaret Braith to be his wife. There were times when they were alone, when the words would almost cross his lips, but always something kept him from uttering them. He believed that he loved her well enough to be happy with her. Not with so vivid a passion as that he had felt for the woman who had trifled with him; but it was love nevertheless.

And Margaret waited for the words that would be sweeter in her ears than any honey from Mount Hybla on her tongue, to be spoken. But she never heard them. Sometimes she tried waiting. But she felt so sure of Percy that she could afford to wait. No one could come between them now.

That day they had roamed up and down the woods bright with the wonderful glory of Indian summer. The world had seemed very far away. There were in it only them, and everything seemed to be whispering of love. His mood had been in keeping with the influence of the quiet, tender day, and Margaret had never felt so sure of his love before. That kiss of his kept thrilling her with strange feelings of triumph. It was like the seal of fulfillment on the one great hope of her life. That which she had striven for was very near now; very near.

How strange it is that when we count upon almost certain success, many times something comes between us and that we think it impossible to lose.

That night Genevieve Braith came back. Her aunt was dead, and there was nothing to keep her away longer.

Margaret Braith sat down in the silence of her own room to think it all over. What effect would her cousin's coming have upon the man she loved? Would the old infatuation come back to him? Could he resist the witchery of blue eyes and yellow curls, and the sweetly pure face?

"I will not give him up to you, Genevieve Braith!" Margaret cried, with all the tiger in her nature up in arms. "Never! never! I would kill you first! He is mine, mine! and you have no right to come between us. So be wary!"

She watched Percy Grayle's face next day when he met her cousin; her hands clutched themselves together in a fierce spasm of rage and hatred when she saw how the sight of Genevieve could make his eyes kindle, and the old, glad eagerness come into his voice. She was not so sure of him after all. He had not freed himself from the witch's spell yet.

She did not leave the room while he stayed. She dared not trust them alone together. If she were to see him she felt sure that he would seek some explanation of Genevieve's conduct regarding his note, and her guilt would come to light. In that note he had asked her to be his wife. If he were to find out that it had never reached her, the old question would be repeated, and that which Margaret had worked for so long would be lost forever.

"Something must be done, and that now," she said, to herself, when he was gone. The look on her face was not a pleasant one. It was like that of a person who has grown desperate, and in his desperation cares little what means he makes use of to accomplish his purpose.

"So nearly won!" kept singing itself over and over in her brain till it maddened her. She shut herself up to keep the sight of Genevieve's face away. At times she felt as if she could kill her.

In the silence of that night death began his work at Braith Hall. His agent was one of terrible grandeur and power. Higher and higher leaped a scarlet flame in one corner of the house, and spread from room to room on its swift raid of destruction. When Genevieve awoke, half-strangled by heat and smoke, everything about her was wreathed in flame. She sprang up and ran to the window in wild terror. Below her was one vast billow of fire. She flew to the door and strove to open it. It was locked!

"My God! must I die in this terrible way?" she cried, white as the garments she wore. The heat was scorching her yellow curls. She had to gasp for breath, and the air she inhaled was like fire itself.

"Genevieve, Genevieve!" cried a voice that she knew so well, through the tempest of fire about her, full of agony and fear. "Oh, Genevieve, answer me. Where are you?"

"Here I am," she cried, in wild, shrill tones. She seized a heavy chair and dashed it against the door. The light panels shivered into fragments beneath the blow. Another, and another, and she was no longer a prisoner.

"Here I am, Percy," she shrieked; "save me."

"You shall not stand between us any longer," hissed a voice in her ear in perfect accord with the hissing fury of the flames. "You have got to die!"

Margaret Braith's hands pushed her back into the flame-filled room relentlessly.

"Oh! Mercy, mercy!" she cried, striving to shake off her cousin's hands.

"I haven't any mercy," hissed Margaret Braith.

"Genevieve! Genevieve!"

The voice was near by now.

"Here I am, Percy!" shrieked the girl.

"Oh, help me! help me!"

Percy Grayle sprang toward her from a perfect tempest of fire that was sweeping down the hall.

"You shall not have her!" cried Margaret, fighting him back, with the terrible fury of a tigress. "If I must lose you, you shall lose her. She shall not win!"

He sprang past her and seized Genevieve in his arms. She clutched his arm, and strove to tear his burden from him. But he fought his way down the hall, foot by foot. At one end of the hall there was a window opening out upon a roof. He dashed his hand against the panes, while Margaret was striving all the while, in a terrible, desperate fierceness, to break his hold on the fainting form of her cousin.

There was a swift and violent rocking to and fro of the old house. Suddenly the walls parted and a whirling, blinding mass of flame swept down about them. One red hand leaped out from all the rest, and smote Margaret Braith so fiercely that her hands unclasped, and then Percy Grayle sprang away from her and out through the window. As he did so there was a shiver of the flaming timbers, and then—death!

Whether or not Margaret Braith's hands kindled the fire which brought death to her, no one knows. Percy Grayle often wonders over it, as he and his wife look back into the bygone years. But they will never know.

## Under the Surface:

### MURDER WILL OUT.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

BY WM. MASON TURNER, M. D.,  
AUTHOR OF "UNDER BAIL," "MABEL VANE,"  
ETC., ETC.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

##### RETRIBUTION.

THAT same autumn night, on which the solemn inquest was held upon the scarcely recognizable remains of old Thompson Floyd, a small posse of men stood silent and quiet before the splendid Spruce street mansion.

It was nearly eleven o'clock; but the lights still burned dimly in the hall.

After a moment of hesitation and conference, Dr. Ashe—for he was in that group—turned to the officers who were with him and said in a guarded tone:

"He is in! I saw him behind the curtains of the library. I would know even his shadow among a thousand. Surround the house as well as you can; I will enter and confront the villain."

"He is a daring, desperate man, doctor," suggested a tall, brawny policeman. "Perhaps one of us had better accompany you."

"No; thanks. I wish everything to be done quietly. We must be as humane as possible for his wife's sake, who, after all, is a woman. I will go alone; if he resists I am prepared."

He drew on the bell-pull at once. The officers sunk back out of sight in the gloomy shadows.

The summons was not answered.

Again the physician rung. Only a moment elapsed, when half-timid, hesitating footsteps sounded within the lighted hall. The bolt was turned and the door partly and cautiously opened. In an instant Dr. Ashe placed his shoulder against the panel, and shoving the door wide open, entered the hall.

Minerva, the wife, half *en dishabille*, a small night-lamp in her hand, her face white and scary, her long black hair streaming over her snowy night-dress, crouched like a frightened hare behind the door.

She recoiled, and trembled so violently that the lamp came near falling from her hand.

"You here!" she exclaimed, in a husky, tremulous whisper. "And what would you, Dr. Ashe?"

"I would see your husband, madam; I have business with him," answered the doctor, calmly, though at first he had been startled at the sudden sight of Minerva.

"What would you have of him, Dr. Ashe?" and she clutched him appealingly by the sleeve. "Speak! for Heaven's sake, tell me the truth!"

"Seek your chamber, Mrs. Floyd," returned the physician, in a warmer, more sympathetic tone. "You must, for your own peace of mind, for your own honor, endeavor to forget Algonern Floyd."

"Oh! what is this! Heaven stand by me!" moaned the poor woman, as Dr. Ashe hastily ascended the stairs and rapped boldly on the library door. He waited for no voice bidding him enter, but turned the bolt and entered the room.

Algonern Floyd, half dozing, was sitting by the table, leaning his brow upon his hand. He started to his feet, as the rap fell upon his ear, and Dr. Ashe strode into the room. In an instant he was erect—his hand in his bosom.

"Ha! Fred Ashe! you are rather unceremonious!" he ejaculated, threateningly. "What brings you here to-night?"

"The determination to see justice done in Philadelphia," was the reply.

"What do you mean?" and Floyd's face grew ashen pale.

"Just what I say, sir."

"Out with it! What do—"

"I mean to arrest you, Algonern Floyd, in the name of an outraged Commonwealth, for the foul, cowardly murder of your own uncle—Thompson Floyd!" hissed the doctor.

"Back! back, man! You are crazy! Stand back! Leave this house, or—"

"Back! No! Do you know these articles—your property—Algonern Floyd?" suddenly interrupted the physician, as he unrolled a small bundle which he had carried beneath his coat. He cast on the table a wet, frayed, faded cord of red silk, and a rusted dagger of peculiar make.

With a wild cry of horror Algonern Floyd reeled back. But as his face grew almost black with the frenzied expression of desperation, he paused, snatched a pistol from his pocket and fired.

A low, gurgling moan, a half-ery of heart-breaking grief broke on the air, and a heavy fall echoed in the outside passageway.

Dr. Ashe, unarmed and untouched, quickly turned. He gasped for breath as he beheld Minerva Clayton, prostrate on the floor, a purple tide welling from her bosom, the rich red blood staining the snowy night-dress.

In an instant the physician was by the side of the fallen woman.

At that moment the front door was crashed in, and a half-dozen policemen rushed into the mansion.

Algonern Floyd saw his position, saw his doom. Without a moment of hesitation, he turned like lightning, and sprang through the rear window—glass, sash and all giving away.

"After him, men! quick!" shouted Dr. Ashe. "Behind the house! Secure him dead or alive!"

The officers darted out. But the game had escaped; Algonern Floyd was not to be seen, high or low.

Fred Ashe felt the flickering pulse of the wounded woman, and endeavored to staunch the crimson current pouring from the bosom; but his efforts were in vain. The bullet had plowed through the very chambers of the heart; and Minerva Clayton, speaking no word, giving no sign at parting, "slept the sleep that knows no waking."

She was dead.

"'Tis better thus! ay! far better thus!" murmured the physician, a tear, unbidden, dimming his eyes, as he gently, tenderly, composed the stiffening limbs. "There is oblivion in the grave! Beautiful, misguided, erring Minerva! may Heaven shrive thee of thy sins and shortcomings!"

And the brawny-armed officers who grouped silently around muttered:

"Amen!"

Algonern Floyd had indeed escaped immediate danger. He glanced not once behind him as he fled on through the almost deserted streets, and lonesome lanes, toward the Schuylkill. He soon reached Fairmount. Skirting the northern border of the reservoir hill, he hurried onward. At last he passed by Girard avenue bridge and peered around the jutting rock at Moll's old house on the bank.

He started, as he noticed a bright light streaming from the windows.

"Ha! Fate itself is against me!" he gasped. "I must seek refuge elsewhere. God pity me! for I am to be pitied!"

Waiting no longer, he turned up the steep embankment leading to the abutment of the bridge. At last, almost exhausted, he reached the top and stood upon the bridge.

He noticed not a dark, herculean figure which had followed closely behind him, all the way from the reservoir.

Floyd hesitated not a moment, but passing through the gate, hurried along the bridge toward the western shore. He had not taken a dozen steps before, suddenly, the dark figure still hanging behind him, darted upon him.

A fierce struggle ensued; but Algonern Floyd was already exhausted; he was now no match for his gigantic antagonist. Slowly he was borne back over the rail, which guarded the sides of the bridge. His toe's hand was grasping his throat; his lungs were almost bursting with struggling air.

"Aha! now I've got you, Mars Capen Algy!" growled the assailant. "We've met at last and I golly! 'tis for de las' time! Ya! ya! don't twist, for I've got you! You is a-chokin' in you! Ya! ya! dat's right! Dat's for poor Becky, de poor gal, dat you killed for taking you white-livered piece o' trash! Take dat! an' dat!" he continued, furiously, drawing a heavy knife, and driving it with a frenzied force into the exposed breast of the unresisting, fainting, dying man! "Take dat! an' when you gits to de bad place, 'member dat Black Ben settled scores wid you at last! Dar! dat will do! Now, overboard!"

Catching the dead, limp form of the mur-

dered man, he lifted it, as though it were a feather, and flung it far over the railing of the tall bridge.

A moment and a sickening splash was heard; and the scarred, mutilated body of Algonern Floyd sunk beneath the dark, chilly waters of the Schuylkill, not ten yards from the spot where the remains of his murdered uncle—murdered by his daring hand!—had rested and been food for fishes for more than two years.

A form crept stealthily, yet hurriedly, along the river-bank. It now lacked only a few minutes of twelve o'clock. The night was intensely dark, and even the paling stars were obscured behind the thin, gray racks of fleecy cloud floating across the inky sky.

Stealthily, swiftly, the man crept on; he neared the edge of the park by the Schuylkill. He paused not to look behind him, but kept straight on.

"By Jupiter! the times are getting ticklish—infernally ticklish!" he muttered, "if the flying rumors are true! And, I tell you, Jem Walton, you're in a scrape, and the Captain, too! . . . Found the old man, have they? Wonderful! wonderful! And yet the job, though hastily done, was well done! . . . Will Algy throw me over, now? Look to yourself, Jem Walton, and get away from here! And then, old Moll, bloody old beast that she is! she knows—too much! Ha! a bright thought! Yes! the hour is late! I have a key—and—my knife is keen! yes, Moll! Now we'll see! we'll see you boasted once—Ha! what is that?"

he exclaimed, as he heard a noise, as of a struggle going on upon the bridge, under the deep, gloomy arch of which the man stood. He listened. The noise increased; then came the heavy, sickening whiz of a falling body; another moment and a heavy splash echoed under the sounding arch, and the flying spray fell in the face and on the beard of Jem Walton.

"What is that—ha!"

He stooped down by the water's edge, as the dark outlines of a grotesque figure, half-submerged, floated up at his very feet and stranded on the pebbly shore.

"Great God! the Captain! Algy! dead—dead! dead! . . . Now, Moll, there is nothing left! The time has come!"

Turning at once, he hurried along the river's edge at a half-run. Then he had rounded the out-jutting rock, and in a few moments paused near the little house on the river.

A bright light burned from the window, high in the air, like a spectral eye gleaming out in the night.

"Ha! golly! she's there!"

As he spoke, he took a pistol from his bosom and placed it in his right coat-pocket. Then he loosed a knife under his belt.

"Bloody Moll is the only living being who can say a word against Jem Walton!" he hissed. "Come, nerve yourself, for—"

The rest of the sentence was lost, as, approaching the dark passageway under the house, he groped along until he felt the heavy door barring his way. In an instant, he had cautiously adjusted the key in the lock, turned the bolt back, and softly pushed open the door, leaving it standing wide ajar. In a moment more, the staircase was creaking beneath his boot. Suddenly the door at the head of the stairs, the one opening into the elegantly-furnished reception-room before referred to—opened. A dark form obscured the light falling through that doorway.

"Is that you, Ben?" asked a coarse female voice.

No answer, the creaking boots still ascending the stairs.

"I know 'tis you, Ben, and that your work is well done. What—"

She had not time to finish the sentence; for the man suddenly raised his head, bounded on the landing, and, knife in hand, dashed full upon the woman. The latter, though taken un-awares, soon recovered herself, and retreated into the room, at the same time drawing from her belt a huge, naked knife.

"Jem Walton!" Then you've heard the news! and at last, you're afraid of the rope! Come on, cowardly villain! come on! and I will rid the gallews of its dues."

She had no need to bid the man on; he was terribly in earnest. In another instant the two ferocious combatants had met in a deadly struggle. They were fairly matched in brawn and in desperate courage. The tempered blades glinted fire as they came in contact. The light was extinguished, and a terrible battle was inaugurated. Nothing was heard save the labored breathing of the combatants, and the terrible dull thuds of the descending knives. Suddenly, a long, wailing cry came from the man; then, a terrible, fierce sputtering, as if his throat was severed, and then, another cry. "You've got it, Jem Walton! You've got it! and now, to the waters!"

At that instant a sharp pistol-shot rung in the air.

With a half-shriek, the woman staggered to her feet, threw her arms wildly about her head, and, with a fearful groan, sunk slowly to the floor. \* \* \* The night passed; the morning came and the sun shone through the narrow window of that ghastly room. It was now a death chamber.

Stark, terrible in death, lay Jem Walton in his gore, his throat cut from ear to ear; and near him was Bloody Moll, a bullet-hole through the temple.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

##### REWARD.

THE reader can only infer to a certain extent the strange revelations opened up by the sudden death of Algonern Floyd, Jem Walton and old Moll. Those revelations would fill a volume.

Certain papers were found on Algonern Floyd's person when his cold, stiff corpse was taken from the Schuylkill, and, for convenience, carried to the same barge-house wherein the night before had rested the horrible remains of old Thompson Floyd. Those papers told a strange and fearful tale.

Documents were found, also, in the house of old Moll, riveting various links of crime and terror with the dark secrets carried about by Algonern Floyd.

We will briefly state that these singular, bloody documents are in our hands; and should a demand be made at some future time, we will write out as dark a tale as ever was spread before the public. Until that demand be made the secret history of these river-pirates and murderers must be allowed to rest.

Only a few words more, and we must push aside the scribbled sheets and wipe our pen.

Minerva Clayton's remains were followed to the grave by only a half-dozen mourners; among them were Clinton Craig, Fred Ashe, and blue-eyed, great-hearted Alice Ray. And as the three turned away from the lowly, fresh-heaped mound in Laurel Hill, there went forth from each of their hearts an earnest prayer for the repose of the soul of the ambitious yet unlucky woman. To this day no marble shaft or blazoned brass tells who rests there, so silently in the morning cemetery. Her history lives only in the memory of those who knew

her in the days that are dead and gone, to return no more, forever.

Old Mr. Clayton turned out to be a defaulter for a large amount of the bank's money. He did not long survive his own disgraceful exposure. He put an end to his existence by shooting himself through the head.

Black Ben was heard of once again; it was far away in the distant West; but his ultimate fate it is not our province here to tell.

Clinton Craig, in due time, succeeded to the property left him by Mr. Thompson Floyd, who was in reality the young man's father. And a singular story was left to the unborn-haired son by the old man; the second paper contained in the small square package told that story.

Clinton had read that revelation with tear-dimmed eyes, on a dark and windy night, all alone in the library. And on the next day he had journeyed to New York. In the quiet shadows of Greenwood, under a moaning willow, he had found a plain slab bearing this brief inscription:

"To my wife, Gertrude; aged twenty-six."

Over that humble stone Clinton Craig had strewn memorial flowers, and with his face bowed to the cold slab had murmured:

"MOTHER! MOTHER!"

A few weeks rolled away, and the silvery peal of marriage-bells chimed in the air. The gentle, devoted, blue-eyed Alice Ray was, at last, the glad, happy wife of him whom she had always loved—Clinton Craig.

And Dr. Ashe, noble friend, self-sacrificing, suffering friend, stood by and held out the ring of virgin gold, that bound the twin together. But no pang shot through his manly heart; no tear started to his eye. He was happy in that others were rejoicing.

On the banks of the Hudson, sixty miles above New York, stands the elegant mansion of Clinton Craig, far removed from the scenes of the young man's former troubles and triumphs. And Alice is spared to him yet, while two blue-eyed boys sport on the spreading lawn, and gladden the passing hours of sunshine there.

Fred Ashe, M. D.—still a bachelor—is with the happy household.

There we will leave them.

THE END.

## BETROTHAL.

I cannot tell you of my joy that morn,  
When we together walked between the corn,  
And sunset beams

Were chasing with soft, silvery sandaled feet,  
The gliding shadows on the golden wheat;  
Fair day of dreams!

Pure dreams prophetic, that all came true,  
And gave me love in life and life in you.

That memorable morn began the charm;  
The gossip had our story at the farm  
Ere they were told;

The pigeons seemed to know that we should wed,  
And cooed a sweet approval on the shed;  
And Isaac, old

And white with peaceful years, took me aside  
To ask if I had won you as my bride.

I read a fairy book that afternoon,  
And through the window came the breath of June.  
To kiss your face,

And honeysuckle nestling in your hair;  
Your father was asleep in his big chair  
By the doorplace;

Dear time of summer dusk and blossom scent,  
Of garden walls in glad bewilderment.

I cannot tell you of my joy that night,  
But I remember that the stars were bright,  
And lilacs swung

To the cool wind with gentle rise and fall,  
In moonlit clusters by the orchard wall,  
Where roses hung;

And I remember with new lease of life  
I had a precious gift, and called it—wife.

AMERICAN NICKNAMES.—Arkansas is called the Bear State, and its natives or inhabitants are Tooth-picks or Sopbers. California is,



## A FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I put more coals into the grate;  
(I see that coal is quoted higher);  
I fix this flannel round my neck,  
And draw up closer to the fire.  
I sneeze at this had cold I've got;  
(This cold and I will stick together);  
I take a draught of bonneted tea;  
And sing farewell to summer weather.

Oh, summer, why should you depart  
With all your days so warm and sunny?  
And change our clothes, so very cheap,  
For thicker ones which cost more money?  
The flowers have faded long ago;  
A shivering thrill all nature seizes;  
No more, no more the roses blow—  
For nothing blows now but the breezes.

The times for sitting on the step  
On summer midnights, warm and tender,  
Are gone, when we sat by her side  
And vowed from buggers we'd defend her.  
We no more lean upon the gate  
And talk and dream of future blisses;  
In language that has many a pause,  
And fill the pauses up with kisses.

No more the night invites to stroll  
And wander down along the river;  
The very thought warms up the soul—  
But causes now the frame to shiver;  
The lonely drives are done and gone;  
We no more pass the board-bill feller.  
We've got to sit within the house—  
And the old folks are always present.

The paths are soggy, wet and cold,  
And broken boots must now be mended;  
The days for linen dusters ended.  
A man could be respectable.  
In summer days for nothing, mostly,  
But how the wheel of fortune turns,  
Alas, it now is very costly!

The change, indeed, is very great,  
But the small change is growing smaller;  
Nothing will grow now-days but debts,  
The purse gets short, the board-bill feller.  
Oh, summer days, a long farewell!  
My very soul grows misanthropic;  
I'll get my landlady's free consent  
And make my strides toward the tropics.

## Adrift on the Prairie;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF FOUR YOUNG NIMRODS.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "IDAHO TOM,"  
"HAPPY HARRY," ETC., ETC.

I.—ON THE SHORES OF WALL LAKE.

The sun had just crossed the meridian when we drew up on the northern shore of Wall Lake with the intention of pitching our tent there for a few days. To unharness our horses, slake their thirst from the cool waters of the little sheet, and secure them at grass, occupied but a few minutes, when we proceeded to erect our camp upon the bank, within a few paces of the water's brink.

It was a beautiful October day—the poet's most charming ideal of Indian summer. A blue, ethereal mist hung over the lake and plain like the vision of a pleasant dream over the memory. The warm, mellow zephyrs drifted lazily over the pulseless bosom of the water and whispered low and soft among the trembling reeds and brown, rustling grass. All nature reposed in its sweetest, calmest mood.

On our right, looking southward, was a little point of land projecting into the lake, and covered with a thin growth of trees and shrubbery. From the east and the south side of the lake stretched an interminable prairie clothed in tall, brown grass, and here and there marked by a lonely farm-house that looked like a black, piratical craft without sail or mast, riding upon the undulations of that mighty ocean of verdure.

As we gazed around us, we could scarcely believe that a country so populous—whose eastern and southern shores were dotted with towns and villages, checkerboarded with farms and diversified by railways—contained a scene so untrammelled by civilization, so free from the ruthless hand of man, and as wild and romantic almost as when it came fresh from the hand of the Creator.

From where we stood the bank sloped gradually down to the water's edge. It was smooth and firm, and covered with white sand and pebbles, which, continuing into the lake, gave the water an almost transparent color. At different points along the shore rose walls of huge rocks and boulders piled one upon the other with some regards to mechanical precision. From this wall the lake derives its name. We had often heard of the famous Wall Lake, whose shores were a natural drive along which the Johns and cavaliers of an extinct race had exercised their elks and buffaloes—over whose crystal waves the young ancient lord had rowed his lady fair, his oars keeping time to his song of love.

By some scientists, the formation of these remarkable walls have been accredited to the Mound Builders; by others, to the Red Man. There are no rocks in the lake, nor are there many on the surrounding plain; which fact leads me to believe that the mystery connected with the erection of these walls finds its solution in the Glacial Epoch, and can be satisfactorily accounted for under no other theory known to geological science.

The lake was about five miles long, by from one to two in breadth. Its shores were irregular and indented with coves and bays. On the east the surplus waters filtered through a dense track of reeds, until, converging at a single point, they poured into a narrow channel along which they continued, gathering strength as they advanced, finally developing into the beautiful Racoon river.

So anxious had we been to reach this wonderful little lake, that the sight of it, and its surroundings, filled our breasts with joy and admiration. Our big friend, Kemply, unable to restrain his enthusiasm, gave expression to his feelings in the exclamation:

"Ga-lor-ious! sublime!"

"Splendid—grand," added George, his black eyes sparkling as they had never done since the day he received his diploma from the Iron City Commercial College.

"It is for a fact," assented Bob, his eyes assuming the proportions of full moons.

Many and various were the remarks that passed our lips concerning the lake and its surrounding beauties; but they were finally terminated by Kemply, who, in a less enthusiastic tone, said:

"Boys, food for the vision is not food for the stomach. You fellows might live on sentiment and poetry, but as for me, give me something more substantial—real facts in the shape of roasted duck and biscuit. I'm losing flesh already from irregularity of our meals. Our commissariat is about exhausted; the 'miraculous' has nearly all evaporated, and we far, far from home and friends."

Kemply, or Jim as he was better known, was a man of three-and-twenty years. He possessed a form and strength that might have been the envy of a Roman gladiator—the whole of the man balancing two hundred pounds of bone, muscle and tissue, a keen black eye, a quick brain and a lively, jovial spirit. Besides, he possessed some peculiarities

of disposition. He would always look upon the gloomy side of life, throwing a sufficient amount of sadness and melancholy into his face and tone to carry conviction with it. This, however, was but a cloak to disguise the real object of his brain which usually was busy hatching up some joke or jest to perpetrate upon his companions. He would oppose one for the sake of argument, and naturally enough he had our whole party to contend with.

George was Jim's opposite in point of size and strength, but upon nearly every occasion, proved his equal on all the salient points that characterized our adventures among the lakes.

The duty of preparing dinner devolved upon Bob, who had had considerable experience in the cook's capacity before. But, as has been the case with many a good housewife, her cook was put to his wit's end. Aside from hard bread and coffee, our provision-chest was depleted. However, the hunger which seemed to have attacked all, soon suggested a plan for obtaining food. The lake was before us alive with its finny inhabitants. We had fishing tackle in our wagon, and in a few minutes every man was ready with rod and line to cast his baited hook into the water.

In searching along the shore for a favorable spot to begin our sport, Jim espied a fishing-boat and a canoe tied up in a little inlet on our right, and he at once suggested that we charter the former for our purpose. As no one appeared to dispute the right of our claim, we at once sprung into the clumsy craft and pushed out from shore. About twenty rods from the bank we anchored in a fathom of water by means of a long pole.

Then we cast our hooks into the water, and, silent as statues, awaited the result with an anxiety plain to be seen on every face. That each man was desirous of being the first to haul out a fish, was quite evident from the nervous manner in which he watched the others' lines.

The suspense, however, was finally broken by Bob landing a fine, large catfish in the boat.

A look of disappointment overcame Jim's face, and he at once became as uneasy as the fish wriggling in the bottom of the boat, muttering something to himself in an undertone.

"So that I beat George King," he finally said aloud, bobbing his hook up and down to attract the attention of any fish that might be passing near, "I don't care a snap. I don't want it said that that little Pennsylvania school-master beat me a-fishing."

Scarcely had the last word fallen from his lips ere George brought a large fish out of the water. A look of despondency settled upon Jim's face; he gave his pole another jerk, sighed heavily and ogled the others' lines.

In a few minutes an ample supply of fish had been caught, when we returned to camp to prepare them for the table. While Bob was engaged in cleaning them, another dug a narrow trench in the ground and kindled a fire therein. Then a frying-pan, with a bit of butter in it, was placed on the edges of the trench over the flames. The fish were cleaned, rolled in flour and placed in the pan, and soon the odor of frying fish and aroma of boiling coffee filled the air and sharpened the appetites of the quartette of young Nimrods.

Finally we sat down to a feast that would have tickled the palate of a king. The fish were sweet and delicious, and we indulged our appetites to their satisfaction.

After our repast was over and the table cleared away, we indulged in the hospitality of a cigar, meanwhile arranging a programme for the future, and adopting some rules and regulations by which we might determine our success in hunting. It was decided that no game unfit for food should be counted, nor game killed but not brought in. The scores were to stand as follows: a prairie hen, 6; a duck, either teal, canvas-back or mallard, 6; a squirrel, 8; a goose, brandt or pelican, 10; a swan, 20; a crane, 30; a deer, elk, 50; and catfish, pickerel, pike and trout, 2 each.

As the evening drew on apace, the "hook" of a wild goose was heard in the distance, and was soon answered by other winged fowls coming into the lake. Every man at once looked to his gun, which was a double-barreled piece of the most approved manufacture. Kemply sported a huge English Twist of about the heft and caliber of a small field-gun. Charging each barrel with a handful of 00 shot, he began casting about him for a living target.

By this time ducks, geese and brandts were gliding to and fro across the glassy surface of the lake—in and out of the purple haze of the distance like a weaver's shuttles. The water was still and untroubled, and glimmered in the rays of the declining sun, a tiny jewel clasped to the bosom of the brown, rugged prairie.

Suddenly Jim espied a flock of geese in the water some distance away. They were swimming along parallel with the shore, their white breasts cleaving the limpid waters like the gilded prow of a fairy boat. Our big friend's eyes sparkled with joy, and turning to us, he said:

"Boys, I'm elected to bring in the first wild goose. Can't help getting one with old 'Ske' and 'Twist' here"—patting his gun. "You fellows beat me on fish, but I'll show you how to take in winged game. There's science in shooting—only luck in fishing. And then, when I kill one, my dog Ben, that you fellows have advised me to kill, will come in for his share of the sport. You'll see him split the lake in two as he humps himself through the water after the dead game. I'm sorry your guns are too light for such a long range, or you might score ten, too. Here, come along, Benjamin, my dog," and Jim started off, with a quick, elastic step, around the lake, with his dog at his heels.

He made his way to the inlet, where the canoe, before mentioned, was beached; and seeing where he could gain some advantage by taking to the water, he launched the little craft and embarked therein, hugging the shore closely so as to put a little slip of land between him and the unsuspecting fowl.

He soon reached a point behind the peninsula, and running his canoe into a clump of reeds and aquatic plants close to the shore, he put himself in position to fire as soon as the geese rounded the point. And he had not long to wait. In a few moments the leader of the flock, a large gander with ringed throat, arched neck and stately mien, sailed proudly into view.

Jim raised his gun, glanced quickly along the barrel, and was in the act of pulling the trigger, when the boat received a violent shove that threw him flat upon his face in the bottom. Before he could rise to his feet, he felt some sudden weight drop into the canoe, and a heavy hand seize him by the collar.

"Confound your ornery, boat-thief'n' pictures!" hissed a savage voice behind him. "I'll earn you how to fool round in this hyer lake in ole Lige Farmer's boats without the axin'." Ugh! I'll shake the stuff'n' outen you, you ornery Dutch nigger! Til—"

Here Jim's herculean strength asserted itself, and springing to his feet, he shook old Lige off as easily as though he had been a pigmy, instead of a large, burly man, with a round, rough-bearded face and a big wart on his nose.

"You blasted old sardine!" was the irate Jim's exclamation, "I'll send your old carcass to the bottom of this lake, dog-gone your old chuckle-headed picture!" and lifting the old fellow in his strong arms, he flung him into the lake. Then he took up the paddle and started back toward camp, while his adversary scrambled to the bank, shook his fist at the fleeing youth and swore furiously.

Meanwhile, Jim's dog had preceded him to camp several minutes, and with his tail between his legs, his back up, and yelps of terror pealing from his lips at every bound.

## A Centennial Tea-Party.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

GRACE GARLAND raised her pretty coaxing face to her aunt Ruth in a manner perfectly bewitching, and that would have been over-poweringly persuasive had she been asking her favor of the other sex.

"Aunt Ruthie—oh, do, please!" But Miss Ruth Tempest evidently had an opinion of her own on the subject under consideration, and a very different opinion from Grace's, judging by the decided look on her face, and the way she delivered herself of her answer to the girl's impetuous, eager appeal.

"It's the sheerest nonsense I ever heard—this idea of a centennial succession of Martha Washington tea-parties! If there has been one, there has been a dozen of them in Baldwinville since the holidays, and I don't see that it is my duty to overhaul my cedar chests that haven't been unpacked in years, to get you up a costume to wear. You've been to several of them, and wore a different dress every time—and this time you can get along without putting me to so much trouble."

Miss Tempest's "way" was much more severe than her intention, usually, so even this vinegar oration did not entirely dishearten the fair pleader.

"Oh, but, auntie, this tea-party is intended to outshine them all, to cap the climax, you know. It will be in the Opera House, and the tickets are five dollars apiece, and everybody is going, auntie. Besides, the proceeds are for the benefit of the hospital, and you think that's right, don't you?"

Miss Ruth wouldn't thaw a drop. "Of course I think the hospital deserves all it can get, but why can't people do as I do give their donations—without spending three times as much on rigging up for this affair?"

"The Denhams and Lawlesses and Grandisons are the managing committee, auntie; and surely you wouldn't want me to dress less suitable than they? Oh, aunt Ruth, you will let me have the key to the big cedar chest, and select one of Lady Maud Tempest's court-dresses, won't you? I can have the loveliest costume there, if you will, and I should be so happy to have Lulu Grandison see what I can wear, when I make an effort."

Just the faintest smile imaginable crept around Miss Ruth's lips.

"I suppose you are really desirous of securing the good opinion of Miss Lulu Grandison's brother, Grace, I haven't much of an opinion of these rich, aristocratic people you are so fond of, and intimate with. They are hollow, false, and their regard for you will be only, as long-lived as you remain pretty, and agreeable, and able to make a good appearance."

Grace flushed indignantly. "Oh, auntie! Lulu is sweet as she can be, and I am sure Harry—Mr. Grandison—is a thorough gentleman."

The glittering knitting-needles clicked rapidly.

"Perhaps. But when I say your fine people are in the habit of wearing masks when in society, that their professions of benevolence and charity and friendship and compliment are as false as—they can be—I speak of what I know; and I don't suppose your fine friends are any exception—not even the all-powerful Grandisons."

Grace gave a little impatient shrug of her pretty shoulders.

"I can't see what it has to do with the tea-party, or the favor I asked you."

"More than you think, perhaps. I will let you have the key of my grandmother's cedar chest on one condition."

Grace was on her feet in a second, all exuberant delight.

"Oh, aunt Ruth! I'll do any thing! What is it?"

A grim smile parted Miss Tempest's thin lips.

"Wait until you have heard the terms. You can have the key on this condition—that, to prove the truth of what I have said, you disguise yourself and beg subscriptions for the hospital from the very ladies who are spending so much time in getting up this tea-party—for their own amusement, and not for the sake of charity."

Grace laughed.

"Of course I will do it! It will be a regular lark. Why, aunt Ruth, I shall positively enjoy it, and bring back—well, astonishing sums from the ladies who are so sure are selfish and only externally charitable."

"We shall see—to-night. I want you to go this afternoon if you have no other engagement. I want you to call on the ladies you have named, dressed in the disguise I shall give you, and we will see who is right or wrong."

Two hours later, Grace Garland went demurely out her aunt Ruth's door, and her second self would not have recognized the beautiful, stylish, spirited girl in this quiet, prim, elderly woman, dressed in stone-colored merino, guilting of an overdress, a black cashmere shawl pinned over the lovely shoulders, the neat lisle thread gloves on the dainty hands, and the Dunstable straw bonnet, close around the face, with a white ruching inside, and white strings, and a double green veil tied over the face that was completely masked by the blue glasses, the smooth, gray wig, with its parting in the middle and combed carefully over the ears.

Even aunt Ruth relaxed into a smile as she detained the neat, unassuming woman a second on the door-step.

"You ought to succeed, Grace. Take this list I have headed with my subscription—it may help you or—not help you. Remember—the Denhams, the Lawlesses, the Grandisons and the St. Philips. I'll wait dinner for you."

And so Grace started off, her lips compressed demurely, her merry eyes shining behind the blue spectacles, her lithe, graceful step converted into the leisurely, business walk compatible with her assumed character; while Miss Tempest went back into her sitting-room, where the bright spring sunshine came gold-enly in, and took her accustomed seat and her knitting, and wondered if she was not selling the key of the old cedar chest too dearly—if it was not too harsh an experience the bright, trustful, happy girl would buy—whose life had been so sunshiny, so little dulled by the cold realities.

So Grace went on her mission, half in ex-

uberant fun, as she thought of the masquerade she was acting; half in keen delight to anticipate the prize she was to receive for her task; and a wondering apprehension if she would prove her dear friends the people Miss Tempest thought them.

Her reflections were interrupted by her arrival at the palatial entrance of the Denham mansion, through which she passed with not a little trepidation, yet remembering very gratefully Mrs. Denham's lofty expressions of her lofty views of benevolent charity, as she rung the door-bell, and inquired of the footman who had so often ushered her in with all the pomposity of which he was possessed, if she could see Mrs. Denham a moment—and to start, in shocked surprise, to hear that lady's voice came peeling down the grand staircase, from her post of curious espionage.

"Foster, tell the woman I wish to buy nothing to-day! Why such creatures have the impertinence to come to the front entrance I cannot see. Close the door at once, Foster!"

Grace answered very quietly, as she caught sight of a head adorned with crimping-pins.

"I am not selling, madam, but begging, and for the St. Erasmus Hospital, and hearing—"

Mrs. Denham interrupted her rudely:

"I have nothing to give—I never encourage door-begging. Foster, see that she goes at once!"

And Grace actually felt tears in her eyes at the sudden falling of an idol!

"I'll profit by Mrs. Denham's reproof, however, and ring at Mrs. Lawless' basement door—dear Cora, with her gentle, spirituelle face and shy, sweet ways! It will be a positive relief to see her, if only for a minute."

And for a whole minute Grace stood, confounded, bewildered, as, in answer to her timid ring, a woman opened the door; a woman so strange, so familiar in a scant calico wrapper, guilting of a collar, with a chalky-white face, shiny and smooth as if polished, and a decided frown of impatience on the forehead.

Was it—could it be Cora Lawless, whose reputation for exquisite taste in her toilets, for her pure, childish sweetness was well-known as her name?

Her voice—high-pitched, unrestrained yet familiar—broke sharply into Grace's astonished silence.

"Well, what's wanted?"

Grace felt her voice trembling as she announced her errand.

"I can't afford to give a cent—I have spent enough on the Hospital already, and the more you do the more you may do. No, I shall give nothing."

And Mrs. Lawless the elegant, refined, charitable widow, whose name headed the list on the Martha Washington Reception for the benefit of the St. Erasmus Hospital, who enjoyed the delightful reputation of being the most successful of all the lady managers in obtaining donations, slammed the door in Miss Garland's face!

A little, hysterical laugh sounded under the double green veil, as Grace went up the steps slowly.

"I never would have believed it of Cora—never! To think how gracious and charming she always is—"

And, as she rung the bell of Mrs. St. Philip's door, there was a very suspicious moisture between her sad, surprised eyes and the blue-glass spectacles.

She had hardly time to collect herself when her summons was answered by Mrs. St. Philip's maid, who took her into the cozy little reception-room she had so often occupied, and into which Mrs. Godfrey St. Philip came grandly, bonneted and gloved for the street, and with a patronizing hurried air that was quite new to Grace, who stated her errand with no little constraint, under the sharp, shrewd glitter of the lady's eyes.

"For the St. Erasmus Hospital? Let me see your list. Oh—Miss Ruth Tempest, twenty dollars; well, she has a mine of money and not a child in the world to support—for that niece of hers is an heiress in her own right."

Grace murmured a reply.

"Miss Tempest was very kind."

"Of course—why shouldn't she be? Here I am working myself to death for our reception, and spending no end of money to make it a success—illy as I feel I can afford it just now. Really, I must beg you to excuse me, as I have to drive to the dressmaker's to see about the girls' costumes."

Grace felt a little thrill of desperation as Mrs. St. Philip gathered her elegant train in her daintily-kipped hand.

"But if you will give me only a trifle, madam; every little helps—a tenth of the price of a dress you will wear—"

Mrs. St. Philip's eyes glittered so sharply, so angrily, that Grace actually shivered.

"Don't add impertinence to your obtrusiveness, I beg. Good-morning."

And Grace walked out, her cheeks flaming no less than if the insult had been personal.

"Thank Heaven, there is but one place more, and if Lulu Grandison fails so far short of all that is noble and true, I shall never, never trust anyone again—but dear, queer, sensible aunt Ruth."

Her heart was beating more forcibly than even the importance of the case warranted, as she went timidly to the quiet side-door of the "great house," par excellence, of Baldwinville, and inquired of the sedate, respectful servant in livery, if Miss Lulu could be seen.

She was shown into the magnificent parlors, and given the very chair that Mr. Harry Grandison had offered her the last time she had been there—when he had looked into her eyes with a quick, ardent glance that had thrilled her from head to foot, and that, as she remembered now, made her wonder if by any possible good fortune she should meet him and thus have the opportunity of enjoying an uninterrupted look at him.

Aunt Ruth had not been very far from telling the truth when she had said Grace cared more for Mr. Harry Grandison's opinion of the toilet she should wear to the Centennial Tea-party and Reception than for Miss Lulu Grandison's; and Grace knew in her heart of hearts, as she sat waiting in the darkened room of Harry Grandison's home, that if she only could once be convinced that Mr. Grandison was not the selfish, extravagant gentleman of leisure she had sometimes thought him, if she only really knew he was not attempting one of his elegant, gracious flirtations with her—she would be so glad, so—so—

Miss Grandison's muslin skirts made a soft little rustling sound as she came down the stairs into the parlor—fresh, neat, sweet as a May morning, with a dainty cluster of carnations in her dark hair that told so plainly the girl's innate delicacy and refinement that manifested itself wherever the truest, purest qualities of woman always shine brightest—at home.

Grace felt an almost unconquerable desire to rush up to her, and be consoled for the annoyances of that memorable afternoon; but she heroically resisted the sweet temptation, and simply bowed as Miss Grandison addressed her, courteously, pleasantly, and asked her errand, that Grace told in a low, timid way.

"If you will let me see your list, please—yes, Miss Tempest has headed it liberally, dear old soul. She is always giving something to every noble cause. She sent you to us, did she not?"

Grace said "yes," while Miss Grandison rung the little tasseled bell near her, and directed the boy in buttons who answered it to send "Mr. Harry" to her.

Then, while Grace sat trembling with delightful apprehensions, Miss Grandison penciled "Friend" on the empty list, and opposite it a donation equal to Miss Tempest's, and handed Grace two crisp bills.

"It is not much—but every little helps, and, besides, we are doing something for the entertainment that comes off for the benefit of St. Erasmus. Oh, Harry, can't you subscribe something on this lady's paper for our pet charity?"

He was a tall, handsome fellow, with the same air of languor about him that so pleased Grace, yet made her fear it was laziness in him, that made her dread lest he was a characterless, indifferent fellow who lived but for his ease and gratification. Her heart was throbbing as she met his glances, and for one moment she felt as if she must cry out the truth.

"More contributions, Lulu? Really, you'll exhaust a fellow's exchequer with this darling hospital of yours. But you remember my agreement? Ten per cent. of the returns of my literary efforts to be donated as you direct. Shall my assessment go in this direction?"

He was so pleasant, so manly, and his gift was the result of his business plans!

Grace watched him write his initials, "H. V. G.," with most exquisite interest, and as his hand touched hers, in handing her the money, Grace felt an electrical thrill.

"You are so good—thank you both."

Lulu answered, very sweetly:

"Oh, no—it is no more than we should have done. Are you not very tired—you seem trembling with fatigue? Harry, dear, are you off? Don't forget that your class of ungrateful little wretches come for their lessons in an hour—and, oh! remember you promised to take me over to Grace Garland's to-night."

"I'll be sure to remember that last engagement, Lulu."

And he bowed, while Grace's heart almost stood still.

Lulu sent an adoring glance after him.

"He is such a darling boy! He actually teaches a class of boys in the German rudiments, thinking it very necessary the language should be acquired in early life. He has just come in from his 'office' as he calls his den, where he writes a great deal, although he insists no one shall know it—yet."

Then Grace went away—more than repaid for her afternoon's work—with gladness at her heart, triumph on her face and money in her hand, as she gave her list to aunt Ruth, and related her adventures.

And Miss Tempest said never a word, but handed her the key of the cedar chest, and then Grace went off to dress for her expected company, who, it happened, (if there is such a thing as "happening"), was only Mr. Harry Grandison, who bore his sister's love and regrets that she had been deprived of coming.

But neither Harry nor Grace cared much; indeed, that evening was the beginning of a brief, ardent courtship, that culminated in an engagement on the night of the tea-party, where, as the Duke of Kent, Harry Grandison offered his hand and heart and fortune to the sweetest, prettiest, most bewitching "Nellie Custis" that was ever personated, and that Grace Garland personated that night, dressed in a magnificent costume of Lady Maud Tempest's she had found in the old cedar chest, whose key she had obtained under such peculiar conditions.

And Harry and Grace and Lulu are well content with the result of the Centennial Tea-party; and aunt Ruth is more than content, and declares privately to the bride-elect that Grace owes all her happiness to her.

Does she?

## Ripples.

A NORWICH (Ct.) clergyman preached on Sunday on Joshua. He opened by stating that Joshua was dead. It was a great shock to the congregation.

There is still great curiosity in certain quarters to learn the name of the Orthodox minister who wrote the book entitled, "Is Eternal Punishment Endless?"

Resolve never to speak of a man's virtues to his face nor his faults behind his back—a golden rule the observation of which would at once banish flattery and defamation from the earth.

"Get out, you ornithorhynchus!" The man departed meekly. "Who's that?" inquired a friend of the speaker. "An ornithorhynchus." "How's that?" "Well, Webster defines him as a beast with a bill."

An Illinois girl couldn't secure a certificate as a school-teacher because she couldn't tell the committee why the hind wheels of a wagon were the largest. All the answer she had was "Cause they are."

Queen Victoria lately sent £3 to a little boy who had been run over in the streets, and a writer says that since this incident was made public, the London cab-drivers have found it impossible to get through the city for the crowd of small boys waiting to be run over.

A small Chicago boy hummed, "Oh, What Shall the Harvest Be?" so sweetly and earnestly, down on Water street, that the commission men failed to notice the stock of plums that he stowed away in his pockets while backed up against a crate.

A scrupulous young woman at Toronto refuses to live with her husband because they were married according to the Presbyterian form, without a ring.